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SAILORS AND SAINTS;

OR,

MARTRIMONIAL MANŒUVRES.

BY THE AUTHORS OF

THE "NAVAL SKETCH BOOK."

There's life in't.

SHAKSPEARE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

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SHACKELL AND BAYLIS, JOHNSON'S-COURT, FLEET-STREET.

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SAILORS AND SAINTS.

CHAPTER I.

NOLENS VOLENS.

“ The crocodile with wat’ry eyes,
O’er man, and ev’ry creature cries ;
Then feeds, with pleasure, on his prey—
So hypocrites their friends betray.”

IN order to account for Burton’s having enjoyed a *tête-à-tête* with his fair enslaver, without interruption, it would be necessary only to mention that the coxswain had previously been summoned by his master, to form part of a *tête-à-tête* of another description, in the veteran’s own room.

Since the lieutenant had taken up his resi-

dence at the cottage, although a salute from the battery in the garden had been duly fired on different anniversaries of celebrated events ; yet, somehow or other, it had so happened, that owing to the accident of his guest, and partly to the pleasure the old gentleman derived from the constant society of his intelligent young friend, no day had been expressly set apart for festive entertainment at Camperdown. Crank, whose respect for old customs was little short of idolatry, became surprised at first, and gradually began to feel alarmed at the consequences to his character amongst his neighbours, of this neglect to collect his friends round the hospitable board, on regularly prescribed occasions. Encouraged by his own state of health, which he now considered sufficiently flattering to warrant him in making, as he termed it, ‘ a comfortable night of it,’ and the perfect recovery of his young friend, he had that morning come to the resolution to fix the fifth day of the month for regaling his intimate friends at dinner, and initiate Burton

in the jovial ceremonies of a JUBILEE, on the anniversary of the discovery of the Gunpowder Treason.

The selections of the guests ; their seats according to rank ; the choices of viands ; and, above all, the disposition of the *troops*, for so he always designated the wines, had been settled in solemn conclave, with almost as much gravity and ceremony as the election of a pope in that august assembly ; when the ringing of the gate-bell, notified the approach of the medical man of the family who immediately joined the captain. He had scarcely entered ere he commenced his arduous attempt to redeem the pledge he had given to that lady, who, in more senses than one, might be designated as his mistress.

“ Bless *my* soul !” said Senna, affecting surprise, and assuming, as he approached his patron, an expression of anxious concern—“ What’s the matter ?—dear me ! I coudn’t think it possible the countenance could so sensibly alter in so short a period !”

"Egad! I seem to astonish every one," said Crank, with a chuckle—"even Thomas, this morning, when dressing me, remarked that he thought I was quite another man."

"Another man, *indeed*, Sir," said Senna, gravely.—

"You don't like to see it, I suppose," returned Crank, on observing Senna shake his head, and compress his lips with no little assumption of medical mystery—

"Indeed *I* don't, Sir!" deeply sighed Senna.

"Come, now, that's candid—d—d unlike your profession—I like a man to be above board in every thing—I'm sure you wouldn't believe *me*, if I was to swear I prefer *peace* to war—for though they've shoved me on the shelf, I should be cursed sorry to see our men-o'war dismantled, and laid up in Rotten Row."

As the latter pronounced the word Rotten, the doctor threw up the palms of his hands, and appearing to sigh deeply, said—

“ Oh, Sir ! that phrase has brought an unhappy association of ideas into my mind.”

“ What phrase ?”

“ No matter, Sir—we must endeavour to make the best of it.—Permit me, pray, to feel the pulse.”

“ Why, hang it, man, don’t I tell you I never was better in my life!—I sleep well, drink well, eat well, and now, begin to walk well—and what’s more—in a great measure, I attribute this favorable turn in my health, to—(for you know I never mince matters—I’m always above board) to forgetting, for this last fortnight, to take your physic,”—continued the veteran, with evident glee at having it in his power, thus jocularly, to *hull* (as he termed it) the doctor with a shot in return.

“ There it is, my good Sir: you’ve at once accounted for it all !” exclaimed Senna, with an air of triumph, not unmixed with reproach.—
“ How could you do such injustice to yourself and fond family, as to neglect the alterative

system, and decline the use of the preventive drops?—Now, Sir, I entertain the most serious apprehensions, and the countenance itself clearly indicates it—that the paroxysm, which is approaching, as I perceive, will attack you with redoubled fury.”

“ Well—you are cursedly positive, Senna.—Why, I tell you, man, I have not been so well for these five years past !”

“ So much the worse!—I’m sorry for it—the more danger is to be apprehended.—A period of good health,” continued he, with monotonous emphasis,—“ is frequently the—a precursor of some very dangerous malady.”

“ How the devil do you make *that* out ?” said Crank, warmly, who appeared impenetrable to the apothecary’s logic.

“ Simply enough,” quoth the doctor, who appeared perfectly prepared for his subject.—“ Now, for instance—as there’s no better way of briefly illustrating *the thing* to a sea-faring man—”

“ Sea-faring man !” interrupted the veteran, with rising indignation—“ Naval officer, if *you* please, Mister Senna—”

“ Well,—as I said, there is no better way of illustrating the medical meaning—or rather apparently paradoxical—bless my soul, how the pupils of the eyes are dilated!—apparently paradoxical—(I hope there’s no determination of blood to the head) paradoxical, I was saying, transitions of this nature, than in this simple way—the great secret of science, you know, is to simplify solutions—for instance, as a seaman (I beg your pardon)—a naval officer—”

“ No offence, seaman’s a name a man needn’t be ashamed of; but no more of your sea-faring men, if you please.”

“ Well, then, as a seaman—you know, you are always prepared to expect a calm will be succeeded by a storm ?”

“ Why, sometimes, to be sure.”

“ This—a phenomenon with respect to animated nature—is, I assure you, strictly appli-

cable to the human frame. And though, my good Sir, your feelings may flatter you into an erroneous supposition that you are in perfect health at this moment, believe me that, as in the instance of the mariner, there are always in such cases, certain and indubitable indications of approaching mischief, which present themselves to the medical eye, but which are quite lost to the common and unprofessional observer ; the sailor and the surgeon both see the workings of animated and inanimate nature, through professional optics, and a focus peculiarly their own."

"There's something in *that*, to be sure," said Crank, whose usual sturdiness now seemed to stagger before the formidable phrases of the man of science. An observer would have said that the captain already appeared a little sceptical of his own state of health.—"However, all I know," continued he, "is, that so well I fancied myself, that——"

“ Merely fancy, depend on it, Sir,” interrupted Senna.

“ Well, God knows—perhaps so. I thought myself so well these few days past, that, egad, I had serious notions of taking the parceling off my leg. You see,” continued the veteran, holding up the limb for the apothecary’s inspection, “the swelling’s all gone down.”

“ Ah ! that, my dear friend, is what I most apprehend. I lament to say that’s one of the worst symptoms of the case. I don’t want to alarm you unnecessarily, but it proves a—indeed it’s a confirmation strong as proofs of holy writ, as your intelligent sister would very properly say, that the treacherous disease is flying about through the system, and has only departed from the limb to lodge itself in some vital part of the frame. Perhaps your appetite is even improved ?”

“ Excellent !—d——n me, Sir, I can eat like a horse—devour bullock’s liver, and saw-dust

for sauce—aye, eat a jack-ass, and a hamper of greens.”

“ Ah, there it is—just as I suspected. I always augur unfavourably, in all cases, of that species of unnatural craving of the stomach. Any swimming of the head?—any visual obstruction?—dizziness in the sight?”

“ No, not the least.”

“ Humph, not *yet*. — Ah! well — perhaps my palliatives—though precaution will, perhaps, be best—for, indeed, I fear now, medicine, after your long neglect of my prescription, will be of little avail. We *may*, perhaps, check the severity of the fit.”

“ Why, by George, Senna,” exclaimed Crank, with considerable warmth, jumping upon his legs, and strutting about the room with vigorous strides, as if to convince his despondent adviser how erroneous were his ill-omened apprehensions—“ By George, you’ll next want to persuade me I am a *dead man!*”

“Not *yet*, I hope.”

Here, there was a mutual pause for some moments.

“You say you sleep well?” resumed Senna.

“Like a ground tier butt, Sir—never start tack or sheet, till Thomas comes to call me in the morning; and *you* know, some few weeks since, half the night long, I was tumbling and tossing about in my bed, like a collier in a cross sea.”

“Ah! all confirm my suspicions. Believe me, my dear friend, that a—that apparent soundness of repose is quite *artificial*—an unnatural stupor—a sure forerunner (if not of approaching apoplexy itself) of a determination of blood to the head.”

“Determination of blood!—d—n—n, it seems if you were *determined* I should have no blood left in any part of my body. If it’s a *job* you want, say so at once—and I’ll endeavour to find you a patient to practise on.”

“This excitement, captain—this positiveness on your part, if you will only have the kindness

to be patient, I shall prove to your satisfaction—”

“ Satisfaction, indeed !” interrupted the veteran—“ pretty *satisfaction*, to persuade a man in good health that he’s in danger of dropping down dead every minute.”

“ Just so ; and if you will only permit me, I’ll convince you that there are two descriptions of patients, that are harder to be dealt with than any other beings in the world. There are the hypochondriacal, for instance, who fancy themselves troubled with every disease incidental to the human frame. Then, again, there are your pulmonary patients—people afflicted in the last stage of consumption, who, positively, at their last gasp—not that I mean, my good Sir, to insinuate that your lungs are at all touched.”

“ No, I believe not—I think if it came to *hailing* the main-top in a hurricane, we’d soon see whose lungs were in the best kelter. I never wanted a trumpet—why, Sir, in that heavy hurricane, that the *Centaur* foundered in —— ”

“ Pardon the interruption. I assure you I don’t mean to assert that you have any tendency to phthisic—that is,—any predisposition to pulmonary affection—I only wish to—a—illustrate my position, by drawing a parallel with your present; or rather fast approaching disorder, with that of those afflicted with that insidious disease. Why, Sir, I’ve known a man, ten minutes before he breathed his last—departed—as your amiable sister would say, from this sublunary world—grasp me affectionately by the hand, and assure me, that he hoped in a few days he would be able to mount his horse, and pay his first visit to me, his medical man, merely to return thanks in person, for what he was pleased to term my professional attention. Well, Sir, he died, poor man, before I left the house. This will suffice, I should think—not that it is a *very* close parallel to your case—to convince you how little are men aware of their proximity to danger in treacherous, and, give me leave to add diseases of a self-flattering nature.”

"Well, but surely," said Crank, "you don't mean to say, that *mine* is a case of this nature?"

"Just so—and one far more treacherous, than troublesome to the patient.—But, Sir, to convince you that I am not actuated by any sordid selfishness (and I am sure it could be only in joke that you just now hinted a job was my object)—"

"No, no,—nothing more than a joke," interrupted the veteran, "it's *my* way,—you know."

"Just so; but to convince you of the sincerity of my motives—I am now about to propose, as the only chance I see to—to—in fact, *save* you in time—(for why should I blink the business to a man, who has met death in every shape)—to order you, immediately, for change of air—for you know, when physic fails, we have no other alternative—to one of our most celebrated watering places."

"Watering places!—what, leave the cottage?"

"Yes, and proceed immediately to Cheltenham, and commence a regular course."

Here Crank, with a face flaming with anger, broke away from him, and flourishing his right hand aloft, whilst he hitched up his breeches waist-band with the other, he shouted aloud--

"I shall do *no* such thing, Sir—pretty pass indeed, to begin and drench me now with salt-water, because I've not had enough of it in my day."

The doctor was certainly not an original or first-rate actor; but, like other persons of his class, give him his cue, and he was an excellent second. A melancholy interest overshadowed his rubicund visage, as he pathetically gazed on the veteran; and the visual orbs were suffused with the briny test of *affectionate* concern: whether the effect of the last pinch of snuff being taken by the eyes, instead of the nose, or of an onion concealed in the sleeve of this treacherous crocodile, is left to the intelligent reader to determine. With that hiccup

of grief, not unusual under strong emotion, the wily tragedian thus expostulated with the friend he was labouring to deceive.

“ Well—my dear—friend—I—can only—only say—and—sorry I am—,” added he, extracting his white pocket-handerchief,—“ the imminent urgency of your case compels me to speak so explicitly—and—indeed alarmingly—’tis the only chance remain—remaining for your life.”

Here his words were quite choked with well-dissembled sorrow, and the handkerchief duly applied to extract the far-famed ‘ Irish Black-guard’ from his tearful eye.—The painful smart being abated, he assumed more composure—

“ As a professional man—I solemnly declare—I—I—Affection—my dear friend—will unman, you see, the stoutest hearts,” said Senna, sobbing.

“ Well! well!—I need no other proof to assure me of your friendship—cheer up—cheer up—I’ll willingly do whatever you desire—but

pray, my good fellow, don't frighten the women about me—you needn't say, I'm as *bad* as I am.—Bless me!—Sure enough—there now I feel that—that dizziness in my eyes."

"Ah, Sir, it only surprises me," exclaimed the arch hypocrite, "you didn't perceive it before."

The good hearted old fellow might, more properly, have attributed this sensation in the eyes to the overflowing of his gratitude, at finding his health the object of such deep solicitude to his friend.—But he was doomed to be duped: and what simple spirit, like his, could have fared better, when opposed to professional science, combined with woman's art?

"Well, don't frighten poor Emily, it 'ill break the child's heart — you'll promise you won't," said Crank, grasping Senna by the hand; "say the trip will do us *all* good—and tell—tell—poor Burton, you know we can drop him near his home."

CHAPTER II.

DIPLOMACY DEFEATED.

All men's intrigues and projects tend,
By sev'ral courses, to one end ;
To compass, by the prop'rest shows,
Whatever their designs propose ;
And that which owns the fairest pretext
Is often found the indirect'st.

BUTLER.

CRANK, who was a creature altogether of first impressions, and, under all circumstances, made it a rule to go straight to work, betook himself at the conclusion of this colloquy, to his own chamber, where he passed the remainder of the afternoon in privacy.

What was the motive for his thus absenting himself, contrary to his custom, when there were visitors at the cottage, may be, perhaps, imperfectly surmised from the hurried manner in which he thrust into his *scrutoire* a bundle of papers, an account-book, and a sheet of paper, scrawled over with calculations from one end to the other.

It may therefore be inferred, that the intimation given by his medical friend had not been lost on him: and that although he, like others in his situation, shared in that unaccountable disinclination to make a prospective distribution of his property, in the contemplation of an event, which he now imagined probable; yet he had not failed to employ this interval, in examining into the state of his income, and classifying his papers, in order to facilitate the task of making his will, whenever that important arrangement should be rendered absolutely necessary.

Whilst the veteran had been thus silently

occupied in these suitable and peaceable pursuits, the doctor, as had been preconcerted, sought out, and found, the grand mover of this scheme of crooked policy ; who was endeavouring to keep herself warm, by perambulating the grounds at some distance from the house. She had chosen this place, as appropriate for their secret communication ; as well because it was remote, and out of ear-shot, as that it had been her custom, frequently before, to repair to this spot with her present companion, to extract from him oral lessons on the practical part of botanical science. There was therefore little reason to apprehend that any suspicion would be excited, as to the real subject of their private conference.

As she observed him approaching, she retreated still further into the shrubbery, where an intervening hedge of laurel completely screened her from observation, through any of the windows of the cottage. Hither the portly professor of medicine followed ; swelling with

all the importance of a man, who thinks he has reason to congratulate himself, on the happy completion of a task which has put all his talents to the test. But it seems to be doomed by destiny, that in matters of a complicated nature, our most zealous endeavours are not always attended with success. It was reserved for Senna to feel this truism in all its bitterness;—for, after taking his lady-love by the hand, and preluding his tale, with a flourishing descant on the difficulties he had had to surmount, and the important services which he trusted he had rendered her, he continued to narrate, with much pomp and self-complacency, the arguments used in his expostulation with the veteran. Gradually warming with his subject, as a man naturally does, in detailing a transaction in which he has figured as the prominent actor; he failed not to anticipate a complete triumph in winding up the conclusion, and laid an unhappy emphasis on the last sentence which escaped the veteran upon that occasion. The

words, “we can drop him near his home,” had scarcely fallen from his lips, ere she violently withdrew her hand, and removing herself to a distance, continued to scowl on him with an eye that could full well pourtray the mingled emotions of terror and rage, which filled her breast.

“Are *these* the weighty obligations—*these* the important services you have rendered me?” Here all the doctor’s self-complacency abandoned him; and he stood bewildered, with unfeigned astonishment, whilst she continued—

“You have only rendered things worse by your interference: had you been mine enemy, and planned them with malicious ingenuity, you could not more successfully have deceived the means of defeating all my wishes!”

Senna, who was as yet unconscious of any act of treachery, or want of zeal, in his difficult mission, appeared astounded by this tone of extravagant vituperation, and was incapable of reply for some moments.

In answer, as it were, to the stupid stare of

astonishment, which pervaded his features, the lady continued—

“ Is it possible you can be such an idiot as not to perceive the incalculable mischief you have done me ? ”

“ Upon *my* word, Madam,” said the doctor, drawing up with dignity—“ your conduct so much astonishes me, that I am at a loss to find terms to characterize so unparalleled a piece of ingratitude on your part.”

“ Say, rather, such a piece of baseness on *your's*,” angrily retorted the dame.

“ If there be baseness, Madam, in the transaction, it rests with yourself ; the project did not originate with me ; and, as far as *I'm* concerned, you have no reason to complain.”

“ I've every reason, Sir—your bungling has undone me.”

“ Bungling ! ” indignantly retorted the doctor, “ what do you mean ? —I pronounce it a masterpiece ! —What, do you think there was no professional talent — tact — and give me leave,

Madam, to add *delicacy*, requisite to accomplish a task which I foresaw would be so difficult, and which I had so many personal reasons to decline?"

"Would to Heaven, I had declined your assistance."

"Recollect, Madam, I never *offered* it—you expressly and earnestly implored it. But what, in God's name, is the drift of all this—where's the mischief done—or who, if there be any, is to blame?"

"Why, yourself," replied the matron.—"What object had I in view, when I solicited your assistance to persuade my brother that change of air was necessary for his health?—Was it not to send that *parvenu* about his business, and break up a connexion so dangerous to me and my daughter's interests. But you have entailed him on us as a companion on the journey; and, what is infinitely worse, proposed that we should go down to his own country, and

amongst his own relatives ; who, with all his boasting, are, no doubt, beggars like himself.—Why not have ordered him to Bath ?”

“ I acted, Madam, on your own suggestion—Bath, or Cheltenham, seemed indifferent to you. I never knew the young man was from Cheltenham. But this is one of the consequences of all crooked policy ; and I wish from my heart I had never undertaken the thankless and difficult task of persuading a man, in a renovated state of health, that his life was in imminent danger, and that nothing but flight could save him : when I knew in my heart that he had better have remained at his own fire-side, particularly at this period of the year.—I have been deservedly punished for my imprudence.”

The vehemence of the doctor had overcome him, and he now paused for breath. He had, however, shot his bolt ; and his wily antagonist had time to recollect her interests, and forget her resentment.

"What is done, cannot be undone," resumed the fair casuist, with affected composure—"we must endeavour to repair the mischief, and avail ourselves of that tact, talent, and delicacy, you seem to pique yourself upon, to persuade him to alter his destination.—Suppose you were to suggest Bath?"

The doctor perceived that, in delicate conjunctures of this nature, he was no match for the female diplomatist.—Besides, he was determined to profit by his late experience, and retreat in time.—It was easy to perceive also, from the altered tone of the lady, that she was well aware of the difficulties of a second attempt to practise on the old man's credulity.

Senna, however, was resolved to escape the snare, so artfully laid for him.—He called in his feelings, if such they might be called, to his aid ; and protested, he never again could be induced to abuse the confidence of his worthy friend, whose implicit reliance, and affectionate manner

in their late interview, had positively (for he “owned the soft impeachment” with some confusion) drawn tears from his eyes—

“*Your eyes!*” exclaimed Mrs. Crank, turning up her own,—“impossible!”

“Impossible, or not, Madam! I’ve had enough of interfering in these delicate matters with people who do not know their own minds—not to say any thing of the ingratitude of—”

“Does the doctor, Ma’am, dine here to-day?” bawled out Tiller, from behind the hedge.

“Yes,” replied his mistress, who was evidently surprised into this invitation through alarm, at imagining that they had been overheard.

Considering the *agreeable* nature of their *tête-à-tête*, it may be imagined this invitation *par nécessité*, was accepted nearly in the same spirit of cordiality that characterised the acquiescence of the discarded favourite Wolsey in his royal master’s command; when the King, after

handing the astonished cardinal the appalling proofs of his treason and ingratitude, sarcastically invites him to their perusal—

“ and then to breakfast,—with
What appetite you may.”

CHAPTER III.

LOCAL PREFERENCES.

'Tis *where* we live,
The place does oft those graces give.

WALLER.

IT is one of the rules of the drama, that the plot and counterplot should, in all well-constructed pieces, proceed simultaneously together; and it will be perceived that, in this instance, (fact throughout being our basis,) the occurrences themselves corroborate the opinion of the critic.

In conformity with the opinion that the action ought never to be permitted to stand still, the eclaircissement of the lover had taken place,

pending the explosion of a plot to defeat all his hopes and happiness. Nor was he destined to suffer singly : the shaft which was aimed at his breast recoiled on the wily archeress ; and she already perceived that her project had been foiled by the very means she had adopted to ensure her success.

Immediately after 'Tiller had announced to the captain that dinner was ready, the old man took his niece aside, and acquainted her with his intention of repairing to Cheltenham. To this measure he was prompted from an apprehension that Senna (notwithstanding the strict injunctions laid on him to the contrary) might inadvertently alarm his niece by the mode of communicating this intelligence. Crank, whose delicacy formed no striking feature of his character ; not that he was at all destitute of feeling, but that he was above assuming it ; had scarcely imparted his project, ere her mother and the doctor sat down to dinner. Enough had thus been communicated to awaken, without satisfying the

curiosity of Emily ; but the very name of Cheltenham conveyed so many agreeable echoes of pleasure and presumed gratification, that she felt but little solicitous to inquire into his motives.

From the transactions detailed in a former chapter, the reader may imagine that certain parties at table felt themselves but ill at ease ; and though desirous of touching on the subject of the morning's discussion, each was indisposed to broach it, lest they might precipitately betray their motives or the part they had taken.

Emily, who had no reason, in this instance, for concealment, and who now seemed to be on the best possible understanding with Burton, was the first to communicate the intelligence of the proposed trip ; and with an ease and artlessness of manner addressed the lieutenant.

“ What think you of our intended trip ? Uncle proposes immediately setting off for Cheltenham !”

"*Cheltenham*, child ! what possesses you to imagine so ?" indignantly exclaimed her mother.

"Here, ma, is my authority," said Emily, putting her hand familiarly on her uncle's shoulder.

"Yes—True bill," cried Crank ; "I think 'twill do us *all* good : and indeed, sister, I don't think you're altogether what you *should* be. What say you, Senna?"

The doctor, from the specimen he already had of Mrs. Crank's vituperative talents, was not disposed again to come into collision in that quarter, he therefore cautiously couched his reply in general terms.

"Wh—y a change of air, at particular periods of the year, is desirable even to people in health," said he, exchanging intelligent glances with Crank.

"Change of air!" said the matron, affecting surprise, "it appears to be a very sudden change indeed ! But I hope it is only a flight of fancy."

"No, my dear—I'm not that way given—matter o' fact ! Thomas, hav'n't you received order to pack up my traps?"

"Yes, Sir ; before eight bells to night," said Thomas, "I shall have every thing stowed under hatches, and ready for starting at daylight, if you like."

"Well !" said Mrs. Crank, maintaining, with unaltered face, her affected surprise at that which she knew was the result of her own machinations ; "it does strike me to be very extraordinary that neither my wishes nor my convenience are to be consulted ; but if it be necessary to make an excursion for health's sake, we might easily have selected a less dissipated place than Cheltenham."

"Excuse me, Madam," said Burton, "few are better acquainted with the place than I : and I must say, that I consider it a place peculiarly adapted to your habits and turn of thinking. There is no town in England more celebrated

for the promotion of religious objects ; and it is proverbial for missionary meetings."

Crank, as might naturally be expected, here seemed suddenly to alter his tone, and observed with hesitation—

" Do you know—doctor, I begin to—suspect," rubbing his chin, " I sha'n't like the place."

Senna thought so too, but prudently held his tongue. There was now an important move on the board ; Phillidore himself might have felt it necessary to hesitate. The matron was an expert tactician at the game. She had, to speak technically, recourse to her ' knight,' who gallantly spurred on his steed to her defence, and ' clapped*' a pair of breeches' on her adversary, thus endeavouring to render nugatory a move so decisive, by inquiring, with a *non-cha-*

* A decisive move at chess, which it is utterly impossible for any person, not deeply versed in this Asiatic, highly scientific, and, as we are taught to believe by the *literati* of China, antediluvian game, to comprehend the extent and aptitude of this allusion.

lence strongly in contrast with the glance she cast at Senna—

“ Is there no other air, or waters, which *you*, doctor, would recommend, as equally salubrious ? ”

A waiting maid of the commonest capacity might have detected what was passing in Senna’s mind at this moment.

It is remarkable, that this was the first instance, either before or since the deluge, where the game of chess was separately contested by three independent parties. The man of science was satisfied it was in his power to check-mate the *queen*. But his mind misgave him, that, in doing so, he might lose a *tower* of strength at the board, and as a *stale mate* was in his mind the grand *desideratum*, and always uppermost in his thoughts, he looked wistfully to his principal for instruction.

It was given at a glance, by the matron’s dark eye; which, it has been already observed,

was capable of conveying, with the rapidity of lightning, every varied expression.

“Doubtless,” said Senna, taking the cue: “Bath would be preferable in point of health; if the ladies could be induced to forego the amusements of Cheltenham.”

“Forego!” said Mrs. Crank, with great animation, “certainly.”

“Bath!” exclaimed Burton, almost in the same breath—“the stupidest place on the face of the globe.”

“So I have always understood,” said Emily, whose mind was already made up, for reasons which may be shrewdly conjectured.

“Oh yes,” continued Burton, “it’s the most tea-drinking, gossiping, slanderous spot in his majesty’s dominions. Then, as for occupation, except you consent to be chiseled out of your money by day at billiards, for the amusement of the men; and by night, at cards, for the benefit of snuffy old tabbies, you might as well be in your bed, as venture your nose in public.”

Crank, who had now, for the second time since the removal of the cloth, slyly slipped the two fore-fingers of his right hand up his left cuff to note the vibrations of life's pendulum, and had already prophetically augured its approximating cessation ; looked despondingly in his young friend's face, and faintly reiterated—

“ I don't think, my dear friend, I shall like *that* place.”

“ Like it !—impossible Sir,” said his informant, who had his own reasons for thus disparaging a place, of which he knew little, but by public report. Detraction, is however, fluent— “ You, Sir, could never bear the formality, and insipid monotony of such a life, which consists in a stupid promenade in the pump-room, where you see constantly the same emaciated faces ; or in once or twice a week being jolted by a pair of Christian ponies* in a chair to the rooms,

* Our ill-used Hibernian brethren, who seem, like the Helotes of old, destined to every degrading duty—sedan-chair-men, paviors and hod-men.

only to be expelled from thence, just as you have got a pleasant partner in the dance, and begin, as the saying is, to warm to your work—and why?—because it is the rule to close at eleven."

"Well, I'm sure," said Emily, with simple earnestness, "*I* should not like that place."

The doctor here warmly entered into a defence of regulations, which he contended were rendered indispensable in a place like Bath; where regularity, and early hours were essentially necessary, in consequence of the delicate health of most of its visitors.

"That's the very reason," said Crank, "I shouldn't like to go there. Why, Sir, I should positively fancy myself at Haslar."*

The young officer's strictures were so many daggers to Mrs. Crank; who finding the tide set in so strong against her inclinations, wisely determined that it would be imprudent to run the risk of defeat.

* The celebrated Naval Hospital at Portsmouth.

Unconscious of the mischief he was making, and its prejudicial consequences to himself, Burton hastened to place, in lively contrast, the attractions of Cheltenham.

“ No parallel can possibly be drawn between the two places, which differ as much in the nature of their amusements, as in the features of the country around them. Nothing can be more enchanting than the scenery in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham ; and the Malvern hills, so celebrated for the salubrity of the air, rival in beauty the fabled regions of enchantment.”

“ You appear quite poetical, Mr. Burton,” observed the lady of the house ; “ it is natural, therefore, to expect poets deal most successfully in fiction.”

“ Though I protest,” answered he, “ against your inference as to the charge of fiction ; I confess there is food for poetry in the situation, the amusements, and the society of Cheltenham.”

"A plague take the poetry of the place—what sort of people are you to meet?—that's my maxim."

"Oh, Sir, you may be assured you will not want for variety," replied the lieutenant; "the society is constantly fluctuating, and it is composed of all classes, from the peer of parliament to patients of the plebeian order."

"Well, *that's* something—variety's charming, they say."

"But independently of its society," continued the lieutenant, "the arrangements are admirably suited to the convenience of patients and visitors—you may sit in the open air, in the sun or the shade, as suits the season.—In the walks, and before the libraries, seats are conveniently disposed, so as to afford the invalid an opportunity of viewing the fashionables in the promenade, or admiring the handsome equipages in the street. Here you are sure to meet with men from all quarters of the globe;

amongst whom you cannot fail to recognize many old acquaintances."

"Well, my mind's made up," said Crank, "if I *must* try the waters — Cheltenham's the place."

The dye was cast; and as Mrs. Crank well knew the sturdy disposition she had to deal with, she felt it unadviseable to attempt to alter his resolve; unsupported, as she knew she must be, by her powerful auxiliary Senna. That gentleman's determination to preserve his consistency, failed not to be considered by her as an act of base desertion; and as is always the case, where a complaisant friend has swerved from the strict path of truth to a certain extent, and on reflection stops short in his career; or hesitates to commit a fresh outrage against his own character; such an indisposition to gratify the feelings, or support the interest of his ally, is certain to be denounced as an infraction of the league offensive and defensive. Thus quickly had poor Senna (though himself

scarcely conscious of it) fallen from his high estate, as the confidential friend of his fair mistress. Already an object of her concealed scorn, she, with her usual penetration, fore-saw that though she might still avail herself of his hollow friendship, it might very shortly be necessary to treat him as an open enemy.

CHAPTER IV.

APPOINTMENT AND DISAP-
POINTMENT.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those ;
But Heaven's just balance equal will appear,
Whilst those are placed in hope, and these in fear :
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse ;
But future views of better, or of worse.

POPE.

INDEPENDENTLY of the matron's severer scruples, the commodore had some vulgar notions of decorum ; and was not sufficiently fashionable to prefer travelling on a Sunday ; even had there been no penalty, in the way of

double tolls, imposed on this irreligious assumption of patrician pride.

Monday morning being fixed for their departure, the work of preparation was not completed in time to permit Mrs. Crank and her daughter to form part of the congregation of Zerubbabel Chapel.

It was now mid-day, and there was a quiet repose throughout the whole dwelling, similar to that, which perhaps the reader has often witnessed, during the noontide hours, in a country house.

Mrs. Crank was in her own room, assorting pious tracts, which she had received per waggon ; for they were bought, for economy's sake, by the thousand ; and came down in bales. Their titles were as sententious and captivating to simple eyes, as their object was undisguised : for, throughout them all might be detected the overweening intention to withdraw the lower order from their due allegiance to the church service ; and swell the congregations of the

'Faithful' in the neighbouring meeting houses ; of which there were not a few.

Emily, although no particular votary of quietude, had retired also ; and was a noiseless inmate of the cottage. She was not unpleasingly, or unprofitably occupied in reflecting on reflections, which are always sure to afford gratification. The practical part of the science of optics was, just then, her study.—In fact, she was engaged at her looking-glass.

The female domestics, too, were quietly busied, like jealous alchemists, in the culinary laboratory, consulting the peptic precepts of those appropriate professors of gastronomy—Mrs. Glass or Mrs. Raffeld ; for it was not until a considerable part of the nineteenth century had transpired, that the peptic art rose in public estimation to the dignity of a science ; and the triumph of male over female genius was completed, by that innovating blow, which levelled for ever the antient empire of cooks in their kitchen, through a KITCHENER.

Old Tiller never had been nice in religious observances. Indeed he was generally perceived in a greater bustle than usual on this day of the week.—Though no rival of the village vocalist, he closely followed the example of the parish clerk in opening his tuneful throat *only* on Sunday. They, however, differed in tastes : the sailor was not skilled in psalmody ; he, therefore, had the bad taste to reject the venerable version of Sternhold and Hopkins,* for the classic page of Dibdin—the poet laureate of the deep.

Musing, as a man in love so often is wont, over a book which he held open in his hand, though sealed to the sense, Burton's ears were assailed by the harsh tones of the veteran's

* “ Sternhold and Hopkins had great qualms,
When they translated David's Psalms,
To make the heart full glad ;
But had it been poor David's fate,
To hear Tom sing, and them translate,
'Gad it had driven him mad.'”

*Epigram on a Parish Clerk, by the
Earl of Rochester.*

factotum, with a running accompaniment on that least musical of all instruments, the knife-board ; over whose gritty surface Tiller whisked his knives and forks to the tune of a well-known distich, which, as taken from the old fellow's lips, ran thus :

“ You're a haxing for your sea—e—men.”

Burton pricked up his ears—he knew the predilections Tom felt in common with his master for the old school ; and their unmitigated contempt for the innovations of modern mariners.—His curiosity therefore increased, whilst the vocalist resumed—

“ But your seamen they be far—”

The rest of the verse was not audible.—The lieutenant was now fully convinced that Tom's muse was in a spiteful mood : he therefore raised the window, which enabled him to hear distinctly the whole verse ; it appeared to be but the *refrain* or burden of a sea-song.

“ You’re a haxing for your seamen,
 But your seamen they be far,
 Your ships will ne’er be mann’d again,
 As they was a-mann’d last war ;”

repeating the last line with emphasis; and upsetting the knife-board with a choral crash.

Burton burst into an immoderate fit of laughter, at this sally, obviously meant for himself; or intended as an atonement to the injured reputation and honour of Tom’s old companions in arms.—For the truth must not be concealed ; he always considered their heroism impeached and calumniated, by the enthusiastic encomiums he had heard lavished by Burton on tars of the present day—

“ Why so, Tiller ?” said the lieutenant aloud.—“ Why not manned as well as ever ?”

“ *Why, Sir?* bekase you hav’n’t got the *men*—there’s scarce a tar with a tail now in the sarvis.”*

* In the Revolutionary war, a tar in the service without a tail, would be considered as great an anomaly, as a *Pache* in Turkey now without a couple.

The window was closed immediately, as if the person addressed had heard enough.—The old sailor chuckled to think his artillery had not been thrown away, and muttering to himself,

“ Let him put that in his pipe and smoke it,” with evident glee resumed his occupation to the same tune—

The employment of the ladies, for the morning, being completed, Mrs. Crank’s parcels and tracts ticketted, and addressed to their several destinations; the choice of ball and morning dresses, in which Emily and her mother were to appear, during their stay at Cheltenham being decided on, with the advice and assistance of the sage Martha, who carefully deposited them in the travelling imperial; the family party re-appeared in the drawing-room.

During the days of Burton’s convalescence, subsequently to his accident, he had endeavoured to escape from that *ennui*, which might have been easily dissipated by less restricted conversation and intercourse, in perusing, with

avidity, the new productions, which were regularly forwarded to the ladies from a neighbouring library, as soon almost as published.— In his occasional criticisms or commendation of the authors, both mother and daughter were compelled to admit his good taste, and often adopt his decision. From being, at first, a critic merely for his own amusement, he soon established himself in the generally unenviable post of reader, during the leisure hours of the ladies; and by degrees, the reserve of Emily so far had yielded to the assiduities of her admirer, that she now often sat down to give wings to time, by the exercise of her musical talents, in return for this condescension. And it may be easily conceived that, on such occasions, she never failed to draw forth, from at least one individual, abundant testimonies of his unfeigned approbation.

Conformably with the scruples of her mother, music was allowed to make no part of the amusements of the Sabbath day: although the

veteran who fully participated in the pleasure derived from his favourite's skill and execution, did not give up the point without a struggle; and Emily had offered to compromise with her mother's conscience, by performing only selections from Handel, and other composers of sacred music: whilst Burton, who more especially felt the privation, attempted, on one of these occasions, to repress this instance on the part of the matron of "zeal without knowledge," (a phrase borrowed, by the bye, from that scriptural lady's lips,) by citing the case of the greater liberality of sentiment evinced on this subject, by the most strictly religious man in these dominions,—his Majesty, King George the Third himself; who permitted his own band to perform every Sunday evening on Windsor Terrace; and failed not himself to participate, on almost all these occasions, in the innocent gratifications of his happy subjects.*

* We suspect Mr. Burton, in this instance, plumed himself on a repartee which, in strictness, belongs to a member of

Nothing is so contagious as habit; and perhaps the most orthodox man in Christendom, if he lived long enough amongst professors of the Turkish persuasion, might feel it difficult to refrain from embracing Mahomedanism. In conformity with this propensity in human nature to become a convert to doctrines reiteratedly, and constantly inculcated, Burton, for the last two Sundays, in order to preserve in some measure appearances, had "followed the motions of the female flag," for such was the nautical phrase used in explaining the motives of his conduct to the veteran; and selected a volume of that celebrated theologian and phi-

another profession.—It was the practice in 1810, to permit a military band to play each Sunday evening on the Downs at Clifton, for the gratification of the good people of Bristol.—A gentleman of that profession, which entitles him to interfere in ecclesiastical discipline, remonstrated with the commanding officer on the station, and denounced the practice as irreligious and unseemly.—The precedent of His Majesty was quoted by the gallant officer, (we believe Major General Warde,) accompanied by the remark—"that none of His Majesty's subjects could be very far wrong, whilst following so virtuous and pious an example."

losopher, Paley, for his perusal. This change in the subject of his studies, it may, however, be as well here to confess, was in part compulsory. For, in her zeal for the edification of her family, and the profitable occupation of this day, it was her uniform practice to secure, under lock and key, all books but those of a religious character: justifying the privation by a remark, that however valuable the advantages of worldly wisdom, the acquirement of *that* of a still higher order, should, at least once in the week, be the pursuit of all persons anxious to "redeem the time, because the days are evil." Nor was it extraordinary, that he should make this, or yet greater sacrifice, to propitiate so powerful an adversary, as he felt Mrs. Crank might prove, were she able to add to the list of his other disqualifications as a husband for her daughter—a disregard for religion. Whether this mode of attempting to find favour in her eye, originated in himself, or the kind suggestion of another, the reader, who is aware

of what Burton was not, will perceive it was adopted too late.

In compliance with the wishes of Mrs. Crank, Burton was exercising his lungs in reading aloud, from the page of her hebdomadal favourite, Paley, and had just concluded that dispiriting reflection on ill-assorted marriages—

“ Love is neither general, nor durable; and where that is wanting, no lessons of duty, no delicacy of sentiment, will go half so far with the generality of mankind, and womankind, as this one intelligible reflection, that they must each make the best of their bargain—”

when Tiller opened the door, and handed a letter to his master, who, as usual, was occupied with his telescope in examining the build, trim, character, and nature of every vessel that hove in sight.

“ Who the devil can this be from?” said Crank, breaking the seal, and, at the same time, interrupting, rather unceremoniously, this startling descant on connubial felicity. Then begin-

ning his perusal of the letter, at the *last word*, which men of business generally do, as if to anticipate its contents, by ascertaining who is the writer, he exclaimed—

“Staunch—Staunch! Stephen Staunch—how’s this?”

“Why, hang it,” said Burton, forgetting his part, and chucking Paley and his philosophy from him—“that’s my captain, Sir.”

“Then I suppose it’s all about you,” said Crank, who began reading the letter to himself, which he accompanied by an occasional exclamation—

“Aye aye—just as I thought—very handsome—come, Burton, you’ll have to put her head the other way.”

At this expression, the searching eye of the devout dame sought in her daughter’s face an explanation of this singular allusion: unconscious of the mother’s glance, Emily’s eye was fixed on her uncle, and betrayed neither emotion, or change of feature, other than that of indefinite curiosity.

"Right enough!—follower for ever," said Crank, with emphasis, still reading.

"Follow *who*? I don't understand you," interrupted Mrs. Crank.

Crank, who at any time had an objection to this sort of interrogatory, did not deign to reply, but muttered on—

"Better than a stranger—hate new faces—sorry you should lose your commission, young man."

"Lose my commission, Sir? What for?" exclaimed the lieutenant, with warmth, and committing an involuntary act of unpoliteness, by '*craneing*,' as it is termed in hunting, over the old man's shoulder, in order to satisfy his curiosity.

"But here, my dear fellow, take and read for yourself," said Crank, raising his head, which came violently in contact with Burton's left eye; punishing the one, for the breach of the rules of good breeding, and reminding the other of his imaginary ailments.

"There now!" said the captain, "I shall

have that cursed dizziness in the head worse than ever."

After apologizing for his awkwardness, Burton left him leisure to ruminate on his symptoms ; and he was observed hypochondriacally consulting his pulse, whilst Burton read to himself as follows:—

" Hamoaze, November 3d.

" DEAR SIR,

" No doubt you will be surprised by the receipt of this ; but having written to our young friend, my second lieutenant, at his agent's, and at his friends in Glo'stershire, both of which letters remain unanswered ; it suggested itself to me, that, probably in his rambles on shore, he might have paid his respects to a family, for which he entertains so much esteem ; and from which he has received so many marks of polite and kind attention.

" The newspapers will, ere this, have apprised you of the loss of our Brig—I am happy to

inform you of my appointment, together with my officers and crew, to another, which the Admiralty have thought proper to name the *Spitfire*. She has been some time commissioned, and is almost ready for sea.

“ Unless Burton makes his appearance, he is sure to be superseded, which, independent of the very sincere regard I have for him, would be highly prejudicial to his professional interest ; more especially as we are appointed to a very fine vessel, and promised by the port admiral a most advantageous cruising ground. So that, I can assure you, I expect to put something handsome in pocket this trip.

“ As an old follower of mine, I should be very sorry he should be excluded from these fortunate prospects ; and you cannot do me a greater favour than by communicating this agreeable intelligence to him, should he cross your hawse —I trust, it is unnecessary to impress more fully on his mind, the necessity of his making the utmost dispatch, to prevent accidents.—In

fact, in the *weekly account*, I have already made a false return, in order to keep a vacancy for one, of whose value I am perfectly sensible.

“With best regards to the ladies,

“Believe me, dear Sir,

“Your’s truly,

“STEPHEN STAUNCH.

“To Captain Crank, R. N.

“&c. &c. &c.”

The perusal of this letter, at any other time, would have produced very different effects from those which he experienced in this instance—He might have felt angry with himself, at the risk he had so heedlessly run, or felt delighted, at the prospect of renewed activity; but such, it must be confessed, were not his present feelings.—The late explanation he had had with Emily, which encouraged him to imagine his most sanguine expectations, might, ere long, be realized; and the prospect of improving his

chances of success, by the opportunities which would be afforded him in the journey down to his own country, were motives almost sufficiently powerful to make him fling His Majesty's commission to the winds;—and there can be no doubt, had the letter, by being addressed to himself, and he thus at liberty to act without control, its contents would have remained a secret to the family, and any young fellow in the service, less in love, might have supplied his place as second lieutenant of the *Spitfire*.

Pending the reading of the letter by our young friend, it is not to be supposed the mind of the matron was idle, or altogether absorbed in the speculative doctrines of the celebrated moral philosopher.—How to defeat the arrangements for a journey, which she had herself planned, was the object uppermost in her thoughts: And, notwithstanding all their preparations had now been completed, and they were on the very eve of departure, a spirit like Mrs. Crank's only felt whetted, as it were, by these difficulties, to

attempt that, which most others would have considered it prudent to deem impracticable.—With a countenance denoting attention to the author's reasoning, and even a docility of mind, occasionally manifested by an inclination of the head, in token of acquiescence, or accompanied by way of impressiveness, with an elevation of her handsome taper fingers, as they hung over the arm of the sofa ; somewhat after the modest manner of a beardless senator, addressing, for the first time, parliament, in a maiden speech ; she appeared to mark the more important passages ; whilst, in fact, she was proposing to herself, in rapid succession, a variety of plans for postponing the expedition,—changing the *route*, —or, what was most important of all, changing their highly objectionable *compagnon du voyage*.

However perplexed with the difficultes of her situation, she was consoled by the reflection, that should things come to the worst, she had it in her power, at least, to affect sudden illness, during the night ; alarm the family, and call in

her faithful coadjutor, the doctor: upon whose services and fidelity, she imagined, having gone too far to retract, she might reckon with confidence.

The longest heads are often too short-reached to compete with the flight of time, or the unforeseen course of events. For whilst she pondered on the means of prevention, the evil she most dreaded was thus remedied, as it were, by a miracle: whilst Crank, as if to render assurance doubly sure, thus addressed his young friend:—

“ Well, my boy, never mind!—it’s all for the best.—I regret losing your company——”

“ What an idiot!” softly murmured Mrs. Crank.

“ But a man mus’n’t sacrifice his commission.—Your captain seems anxious for your welfare, and I wish you luck,” said the veteran, clutching the lieutenant by the hand with a force which equally displayed the old man’s vigorous health, and the cordiality of his kindness.

Here was no room for evasion.—The blow

struck was decisive;—and Burton, whose face reminded the fair Emily this moment of the doleful dumps of poor Widdrington, as described in the ballad of Chevy Chase, heard the commodore pronounce his opinion on the necessity of his departure with nearly the same feelings as a culprit at the Old Bailey greets the sentence of the judge who banishes him from his native land for life.

CHAPTER V.

ADIEUS.

And there were sudden partings, such as press
The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
Which ne'er might be repeated.

Childe Harolde.

Most persons who have arrived at years of discretion, have been indiscreet enough to be, at least, once in love.—To such readers it will be unnecessary to describe the state of mind in which Burton passed this evening. But for the benefit of the younger classes of society, it will be as well to observe, that he was totally indifferent whether the world then fell to pieces, so

that in the general ruin he might have escaped the keen consciousness of that exquisite misery which overwhelmed him. Chagrined and mortified ; he felt as if the cup of bliss had slipped from his hands at the moment when the brim pressed his lip.—He was about to resign all his towering expectations ; and, singular to say, he was compelled to forego, at least for a time, those expectations in conformity to the wish, or rather by the command of that friend on whom alone he could rely for their fulfilment. Yet, it appeared, there was no alternative ; for he was convinced the surest way to lose the girl was to sacrifice his professional character ; and he well knew that Crank was made of that stern stuff which would not fail to look upon a wilful neglect of duty as justly meriting the highest censure of his superiors, and deservedly entailing on him the loss of his rank in the service.

Extreme as his vexation undoubtedly was, he, ere the conclusion of the evening, became sufficiently collected to cast about, and devise

means for once more procuring an interview with Emily alone. This, as before observed, was at any time a matter of considerable difficulty, and the more he thought upon it, the less was he induced to hope it would be practicable. At times he felt almost disposed to throw himself on the old man's generosity, and, depending on the kindness which he had already experienced from him, fully disclose the perplexity and anguish of mind under which he laboured, as a pretext for soliciting his advice. Yet here again it suggested itself to him, that such were Crank's notions of discipline, and devoted attachment to the service of his country, that he would doubtless counsel him to join, pursuant to orders, had he been not only the husband of Emily, but had it been his very wedding-day. Failing to derive consolation from this source, he bethought himself of all the stratagems he had ever heard or read of under similar circumstances.—The most feasible and most likely to effect his object appeared to be pressing Martha into the service;

and much as he would, under any other circumstances, have contemned the practice of tampering with a servant's fidelity, he found himself compelled, as a *dernier resort*, to adopt a practice so highly objectionable and disingenuous. To afford him even a chance of success in accomplishing his object by this clandestine mode of proceeding, he determined to act with the utmost caution. Feigning, therefore, that his preparations for departure were incomplete, he repaired to his own room, determining to solicit by letter an interview with Emily, if only for a few seconds.

And now, as he sat alone, pen in hand, and that pen already dipped in ink, every objection which he had before felt seemed to acquire new force. Nor was this unnatural; he was no longer under the fascination of that woman's eye, for whom he would have dared everything; and as his feelings became calm, his integrity and rectitude of principle reasserted their influence over his mind. After some time spent in this men-

tal struggle, he flung his pen aside, and thus gave utterance to his feelings :—

“ Wretched man that I am ! how every thing appears to have altered its aspect !—That which once would have been the first wish of my heart, now proves a source of disappointment and vexation.—How happy ought I to be again to resume a life of activity in my profession.—Where are my ambitious aspirations ?—What has become of my firmness of mind ?—How absolute and uncontrollable is the influence of this passion !—an influence the more extraordinary as the chances of success seem now to be rendered yet more doubtful.—This ill-timed appointment —this detestable, dangerous trip, to a place full of gaiety and dissipation—would that I had been dumb, rather than have recommended it ! —A young girl too, of her personal beauty and accomplishments—and, worst of all, with her prospects and expectations !—How the honied flatterers will surround her !—What new pros-

pects may arise!—What dreams of ambition!—How certain my misery!—How soon shall I be forgotten!”

He had now risen from his chair, and wildly paced the room—at intervals exclaiming—“ Yet her disposition is noble—her heart generous and susceptible,—too true it is, I feel her all angelic.—Why then should I despair?—If I could obtain an assurance from her lips—that none other——”

And here he stopped, and appeared almost choking with something he could not utter. Again regaining something like self-possession, he argued as men do, who are determined to be convinced.

“ Had I but that pledge!—the slightest pledge—I could trust to fortune.—Has she not acknowledged a preference?—Is he not my friend?—And has he not assured me, that the inequalities of our fortunes alone impose an obstacle to my wishes?—Nay, more, pointed

out the mode of securing the acquiescence of all."

Here his eye kindled with animation, and his expressive features were lighted up by hope.

" Yet," continued he, checking himself, " all these hopes are visionary, unless I see her again alone.—Little did I think yesterday our parting was so near,—had she, too, been aware, she perhaps would have been less reserved—and if entreaties, prayers, or my tears could move her, my heart would not now be distracted with uncertainty.—Oh!—I feel that my life is bound up with her's.—Her fate may never be mine—but without her, misery must be my lot."

His agitation now became intense, and he arrested his rapid march to and fro in the centre of the apartment; where he stood encircling, and violently compressing with both hands his throbbing temples, in an attitude of mingled resolve and despair.

A few moments afterwards, as if recollecting the urgency of his situation, and the value of the few minutes that were left for action, he hastily resumed—

“ What do I here?—Why do I hesitate?—There is but one course open.—Call it a breach of hospitality!—of confidence!—it must be done.—The sacrifice must be made,—I must risk consistency, character, or—lose her—Never! never!” said he, with a shudder,—“ perish that damning thought—I am resolved.”

And resolved it appears he was.—He seized his pen.—Every suggestion of prudence was vain amid the storm of fearful passion, which raging within his bosom now mounted to his brain.—One line sufficed to inform her of his wish--another, to announce his determination.

“ I am distracted.—Let me, angel of my destiny ! see you *alone* for a moment. Fail not, or this night is the last of Burton’s life.”

The dreadful summons of a man resolved on

self-destruction was sealed, and in a few seconds after, forced with many entreaties, grateful professions, and his last guinea, on the reluctant Martha.

In half an hour he received this short reply :

“Terror conquers prudence.—When all have retired, expect me in the drawing-room, but not alone.”

He thrust the note into his pocket, and rejoined the family.—The old gentleman was already preparing to betake himself to rest. A cordial interchange of kind wishes on his part, and grateful acknowledgments on that of Burton took place ; and after taking a suitable leave of Mrs. Crank and her daughter, he retired with the rest.

The clock struck eleven—when a gentle tap at his room-door summoned him to the meeting.—He recognized the maid servant in silence, and quietly followed the direction of the light which faintly beamed from the appointed place of rendezvous.

The door was closed by Martha as he entered the drawing-room, where he perceived Emily by the fire-place, apparently deep in thought, and still as the stone on which she leaned for support.—She was scarcely conscious of his approach, ere he was at her feet, and overwhelmed her with grateful acknowledgments for the kind confidence thus reposed in him.

“Attribute it not to confidence, Mr. Burton, but to the alarm your message excited—you completely terrified me into compliance.”

“Pardon the anxiety, Emily,—the urgency with which I sought this interview.—In *my* circumstances, distracted as I am between doubts and fears, life would have been valueless, had I not once more seen you alone!”

“Imagine not we are alone, or unobserved,” said she quickly, “nor dare I remain longer—Farewell! You have my best wishes!”

“A thousand thanks,” said he—“excellent, amiable girl.—But stay.—Leave me not in this state of distraction.—Encourage me to hope—”

" You may rest assured," said she, interrupting the unfinished entreaty, " that I am not insensible to your merits—much less can I be ungrateful—To you I owe my life."

" Talk not of gratitude," exclaimed he; " you owe me nothing—'twas instinct—self-preservation. Think you I should have survived you?"

" I doubt not your feeling—your heroic generosity."

" Then force me not," said he, " to wish that moment of peril had been my last. Gladly then would I have resigned life for your preservation—or even to endear my memory to your recollection—and now I swear that existence will be intolerable, unless shared with you."

" Why," said she, with rising agitation, " will you alarm me thus? Rest content, my friend, with an assurance that I shall ever feel a lively interest in all that concerns you. It would, indeed, be difficult to *forget*—"

" My soul's angel!" he exclaimed, with rap-

turous admiration—"Your noble spirit—your divine perfections are my best security—yet grant me, Emily, the assurance, that at my return——"

"Cease, pray cease!—Recollect I am not mistress of my own destiny.—Adopted by my generous uncle, but for his bounty and compassion, I should have been now an indigent, neglected orphan, unworthy of your preference. His wishes I must consult, in order to secure my *own* respect.—I owe him more than a daughter's duty."

"I am not then interdicted—" said the lieutenant, more cheerfully; and he would have proceeded.

"Press me not further.—Here," said she, extending an arm, whose inimitable tincts would, if contrasted, have shamed Titian's choicest colouring—"is my hand, in friendship: a friendship sincere, as I feel it will be *lasting*."

He snatched the love-pledge—he pressed it

to his lips—he pressed it to his heart.—Pity, if not love, lighted up her divine features, and she cast on him a look, such as warmed the pure seraph's breast at sight of our first parents in the guileless innocence of Eden.—How nearly were his fondest anticipations realized! He was overpowered by a feeling of intense delight—and caught her, suffused with blushes, to his arms. Alarmed by his manner, she struggled to disengage herself; each effort, like those of the limed bird, but the more entangled her. He pressed the struggling girl to his bosom, and almost suffocated her with burning kisses.—She would have shrieked, but her voice failed ere she recollect'd assistance was at hand—

Her sigh was balm, her tears were dew,
And only rais'd his flame anew.

Her eyes swim—the purple light of health deserts her cheek—she is pale as the Parian marble—she sinks in his strained embrace.

Recalled to himself by finding her whom he

adored lifeless in his arms, his alarm became as excessive as his passion had been uncontrollable.—A groan of horror escaped him at witnessing the effect of his rash violence. He placed his hand on that bosom only to find it throbbed not—the pulse of life stood still.—His agony was immeasurable.—Sinking on one knee to support her on the other, and give her a fairer chance to revive, the fiery tears fell fast on her pale neck. He durst not move, nor desert his sad burden to seek assistance—To reveal her situation was interdicted by love and honour.—Were she to perish, he had inhaled the last breath which passed her lips.—He might, perchance, be branded as her murderer, by her relations—by the world.—“What have I done!” he exclaimed, in the bitterest anguish. “What cursed fate presided at my birth! Wretch!—Monster that I am!”

At this moment the door opened; and the faithful Martha, who had been stationed within call by her young mistress, burst in, sobbing

with grief, and mingled her angry reproaches with his own.

“ Begone—cruel—cruel—hard-hearted man ! leave us—yet stay a moment—raise her with me to this couch—support her head—there ! Great God, does she still live ?”

As he deposited her on the couch, he felt as though he was placing her on her bier.—She sighed faintly, and he exclaimed, in a frenzy of joy—“ She lives !”

“ Then fly,” said the fond-hearted menial, “ fly this moment, or we are betrayed.—I entreat you, Sir, leave us : for you have alarmed some one, and I hear footsteps approaching.”

She concealed the light behind the great chair, and violently forced him to the door. He respected her fidelity, and made no resistance. He fled, and reached in silence his own room. In a moment his candle was extinguished, and he listened, in breathless suspense, at his door for some minutes.—A quick footstep crossed the hall.—He heard Emily’s name pronounced, with evident

agitation, by her mother; indistinct sounds, as of queries and answers, ensued.—The servant girl passed hastily by, and, in returning with water, whispered to him, as he opened the door,—

“ Be still, for mercy’s sake, Sir—she’s much better,” and regained the drawing-room in haste.

The door was closed—he ventured on tip-toe near enough to it to hear indistinctly the faint accents of Emily in reply to her mother’s anxious solicitude; and he was soon after compelled by their approach to betake himself to his room with precipitation; where, for hours, the distracting tumult of his sensations prevented all repose.

CHAPTER VI.

TRAVELLING A LA MODE.

creeping like snail
Unwillingly to school.

As You Like It.

IT is not to be supposed that having retired in so agitated a state of mind to his room, the lieutenant was very successful in cultivating sleep.—Ere daylight he was dressed and prepared for his lonely journey.—How different from the anticipations of the preceding day!—After the thrilling interview just described, he had little relish for a cold, ceremonious parting; and determined on a precipitate retreat ere the

family had risen.—By the assistance of old Tiller, who was the only person stirring in the house, his ‘traps,’ as Tom called them, were removed to the little inn, from which the only cross conveyance to the place of his destination daily started. His funds, it must be confessed, when he left Plymouth, were comparatively slender; and they were considerably diminished by the charges of travelling post, and the expenses incidental to his accident. Any inconvenience resulting from this might have been obviated, had not his modesty, or rather let it be admitted, his pride, prevented him from confessing the real state of his finances when Crank, the night before, tendered him, if requisite, the use of his purse in order to enable him to join his ship. He felt as most young men of spirit would have felt under such circumstances; more especially as Crank was a man too much above board, as he termed it, to think it necessary that an offer to lend his own money should be made in the absence of his sister-in-law: the lieutenant

therefore declined the veteran's kindness, assuring him he had sufficient to defray all expenses incident to his return.

After dismissing Tiller with a *douceur*, which he could ill spare, he counted out his money, and perceived he had but a few shillings left. Economy, he felt, must be the order of the day. —On inquiry he ascertained that a caravan, or one horse covered tilt cart, would shortly set out for Plymouth ; and though the conveyance was not remarkable for its speed, it was convenient under the circumstances, and suited the state of his finances.

Having been detained nearly an hour beyond the appointed time, waiting for a pilot, who was expected to return after bringing round a vessel to Torbay, where it seemed, however, he himself had anchored, as he failed to join company ; the caravan set out, carrying as outside passengers the driver and a pot companion, still under the effects of last night's inebriation ; a butcher, whom they were to drop at Totness ; the

lieutenant, and a handsome young woman with her infant, about to rejoin her husband at Plymouth.

And here was our friend Burton, who had arrived, alone and lord-like, with post-horses in ‘fume and furious haste,’ returning sluggishly and unwillingly to duty at a jog-trot pace, hardly faster than a walk; and surrounded by persons of so low a rank in life, that he was glad to preserve a strict *incognito*, and a stricter silence. Indeed his mind had abundant food to ruminate upon; and so involved was he in reflecting on the peculiarity of his situation, that the driver flagellated his beast unnoticed, till Humanity Martin would have shed tears; the butcher openly made furious love to the young wife; the baby cried and screamed itself, at times, into fits; and the drunken man in front swore as many oaths as, had a magistrate been present to enforce the legal penalties, would have rendered him a beggar for life; yet the thoughtful, pensive son of Neptune was so silent, so abstracted in manner, and fixed his eyes so

intently on the features of the scenery through which they passed, that he either heard not, or appeared not to hear a syllable of all that passed.—At Totness they stopped, and changed the horse. Much to the satisfaction of the young woman, who was a fine specimen of an English peasant, the butcher's wife almost immediately appeared and took him captive ; thus relieving her from his persecution. The remaining parties having partaken of such refreshments as the inn, or their pockets, afforded, and the drunken man being now far advanced in a state of happy obliviousness, the caravan again set out at a brisker pace.—The evening set in to rain ; the drunken man being twice picked up off the horse's crupper by the driver, was bundled in from the front bar to an inside place ; and soon fell asleep, very unceremoniously, on the young woman's shoulder ; who, from this circumstance, first became an object of interest to the lieutenant. He soon disengaged her from the weight of her drowsy suitor ; and

she required no second invitation to place herself on Burton's side of the tilt, leaving the slumberer to snore at full length.—Women of all ranks, particularly of an humbler, are peculiarly sensible of well-timed attention ; and this act of civility almost immediately put them on a footing of familiarity. From the simple inquiries of his female fellow traveller about the *Volage* ; and the Adriatic ; and when a ship would be paid on her return to harbour ? and what leave a sailor might obtain to come on shore ? he could hardly fail to learn that she was one of that class of women in humble life, whose happiness is more transient, and whose patience and virtue is more severely put to the test than those of any other females breathing ;—she was a sailor's wife.

She had been married but a week, ere her husband had been compelled to leave her in the village where both first saw the light ; he was now returned after a two years' absence in

the Mediterranean ; and we leave it to the sympathy of our female readers to conjecture, how full her heart must have been of the fondest and happiest anticipations on the subject of their meeting.

Before night-fall they again changed the horse, and the lieutenant failed not to press the fair traveller to share the few comforts his almost exhausted purse afforded. It was nearly two hours after dark ere they arrived at Plymouth-Dock. He inquired into the character of the house in which she proposed to set up, and recommended her to the protection of the landlady, promising to take care that her arrival should be communicated to her husband immediately, and departed for the *Prince William Henry*, followed by a lad who carried his valise.

As he had anticipated, here he found his senior lieutenant sitting alone in the coffee-room, who no sooner eyed him, than he jumped up

(waving every thing like ceremony) to receive him with a cordiality, perfectly in unison with his general character.

“ Bless me, Burton ! where the deuce have you been ?—We had given you up for lost !—Did the captain’s letter reach you ?”

Without waiting for a reply, he continued—“ Luckily you have arrived, my boy, or you would have been superseded next week.”

“ I wish,” said Burton, drawling out his words with indifference,—“ I wish I had.”

“ The devil you do !—Why so ?” said Hasty.

“ It would have been a thousand times better for me !”

“ Why,” returned the first lieutenant ; “ you seem more down in the mouth than ever—what, hav’n’t you shaken off the Dartmouth craft yet ?”

“ Hasty, avast with that profanation !—remember you are not talking now of an ordinary woman, but of a being, far beyond her sex in beauty, accomplishments, and virtue !”

“ Oh, hang your accomplishments, and your virtues!—you’ll put me into a fit of the blue devils.”

He then rang the bell with violence, and when the waiter appeared he inquired—

“ What’s the play?—I say, Burton, you must go, and shake off this fit amongst the girls—there you’ll see,” said he, with a laugh, “ both beauty and accomplishments.”

“ I’m not in a humour,” said Burton, “ for amusement or mirth—I’m not well—I require rest.”

“ See here,” exclaimed Hasty, raising his arm with mock energy—“ Damme if you don’t come to-night to the play, I’ll send you on dock-yard duty at day-light to-morrow.—Come, waiter—coffee for two, and take Mr. Burton’s traps up to my bed-room. I suppose you’ve a bed for him—but no matter—don’t wait for us after twelve.”

“ No, Sir,” said the waiter, making an obsequious bow, who felt as if he was about to pay a compliment in what was to follow—“ No, Sir,

we never *do* sit up for the navy gemmen.—Misses says as how, it's never no use.”

‘ Many a time and oft,’ Burton would have relished the humour of this left-handed compliment: but he was now that anomalous creature, a lover; and saw every thing through an altered medium.—Hasty saw no humour in it, so remarked to his friend—

“ That cockney chap is a devilish civil fellow, and seems to know how to behave himself.”

The waiter soon returned with coffee, announcing—

“ The play to-night, Sir, is Theller, or the Moor of Wenus—It is bespoke, Sir,—and no doubt there’ll be a crowded ouse, has hall the midshipmites in the arbour har ashore.—Our stage manager too’s, a wery great hector, and plays the Black to the life.”

“ Thank you, William, thank you,” said Hasty, and turning round to Burton, half whispered—“ Now that’s what I call a curst clever

fellow. He seems to be up to every thing—I wonder was he ever at sea?"

Burton was too much in the *blues* to hear anything of the black,—the manager,—or the Moor. One note, however, had been struck which vibrated on his ear, and soothed his sorrow—it was the illiterate allusion of the waiter to that type of all female loveliness,—and he might have adopted Hamlet's confession to his friend, and said, I have her "in my mind's eye."

In this frame of mind he sat musing and sipping his coffee; and would have sipped and mused on till midnight, had not Hasty, who was determined to carry his point, roused him from his reverie, by desiring him to "toss-off his scald, and make haste. And now I recollect," added he, "you never asked for the skipper, or any of your old shipmates. It looks as if you'd lost all your manners—but no wonder, you've been so long ashore."

If any thing could have made Burton laugh,

it would have been a remark so singular ; but he was ‘not in the vein’ to relish, or retort, a joke. Thus reminded of his negligence, he endeavoured to make an *amende*, by a general inquiry after their health, whilst, as to the ship herself, he sincerely wished her at the bottom of the sea, or that she still constituted part of the effective force of the enemy ; remarking—and it was the only apothegm which had escaped his lips for the last twenty-four hours—“ That it is always the case, when a man would give his eyes for a ship, he can’t get one—but if he has his hands full of business ashore, he is sure to be compelled to leave it at sixes and sevens, in consequence of some cursed appointment.”

“ Why, what’s the matter now ?—one would think you had lost a chance of being made a bishop, you’re so confoundedly discontented—I thought once, you were fond of your profession ;” added Hasty, in a taunting tone, which

did not fail to rouse the slumbering spirit of his friend.

"And so I am; but, my dear Hasty," answered Burton, with a sigh—"my heart's broken."

"D—— it, don't be down-hearted about trifles," said his brother officer, who now began sincerely to pity his extreme dejection—"What's one woman more than another—if you must marry—wed your ship, and seek fortune in your profession!—come, that was my old dad's maxim; and he died within three of his flag." So saying, he good-naturedly seized his junior by the shoulder, and pulled him perforce out of the room.

CHAPTER VII.

FEELING A FARCE.

— A tragedy, wherein we sit as
Spectators awhile, and then act our part in it.

SWIFT.

We are all made fools by our feelings.

Spanish Proverb.

STROLLING across Fore-street, our adventurers soon arrived at the Dock Theatre.—Nor can it be concealed, that, in this search after amusement, their anticipations were widely dissimilar.

From what has been already mentioned, it will be observed, that the senior of the two, although on him, by virtue of his office, had

devolved all the bustle and labour of preparing and equipping their new vessel for sea, imagined he had good reason to congratulate himself on being so speedily appointed to a ship: whilst his companion, who felt this, instead of a subject of congratulation, positively a stumbling block in the path of his fortune, was so chagrined, that he was little disposed to accept of amusement, however seductive the shape in which it might present itself. Still, however, from experience, Hasty was induced to believe, there was something so exhilarating, in the very aspect of a theatre, that he had no doubt on his mind, could he but once involve his friend amidst the lively turmoil and tumult within, he would soon forget all his cares and anxieties without.

Bustling through the crowd of noisy boys, and showily dressed women, which surrounded the doors, they paid their money; and as Burton happened to be in plain clothes, he was soon accommodated with a seat—a circumstance,

by the bye, which ensures respect in king's ports, from even the 'Dock-yard-Maties'—a class of men, whose hostility, and turbulent insolence to naval officers—theirsevles, as it were, a part or appendage to the navy,—is proverbial.—Hasty appeared to have a roving commission, and went from box to box, and place to place, chatting with his acquaintances. The house was already full, in consequence of its having been announced, that the play had been selected in compliance with the wishes, and would be performed, "under the patronage of the captain and officers of His Majesty's ship, *Flora*." Although the curtain had not risen, it would be absurd to say, that the performance had not already commenced. That description of entertainment, which has become so prevalent on the boards of minor London theatres, in our day yclept, a Monopolylogue, was performing with an astounding effect, accompanied by a crash of wind instruments in full practice—

but, to be intelligible, it will be necessary to drop the metaphorical style.

It has fallen to the lot of few persons, not in the naval service, to be present at a dramatic representation, either here or at Portsmouth. Those who have witnessed it, will scarcely forget its possessing this striking distinction, from other representations of the kind ; that it appears, most of the persons frequenting the theatre, have assembled, rather with a view to amuse themselves by their own performances, than by any exhibition of the talents of the hapless votaries of the sock and buskin ; or, in other words, that the performers here are before the curtain, and, instead of receiving salaries, pay for the permission to perform to the few who are privileged to walk the stage ; but who might almost as well be mutes on the occasion.

Notwithstanding the noise and bustle which prevailed amongst the midshipmen in the slips,

the warrant, and petty officers in the pit, and the sailors and “jollys” aloft, an evident anxiety was manifested, that the piece should proceed—or, speaking with greater adherence to truth, that *something* should be going on, to keep, as they termed it, “the company alive.” The *Flora’s* ship’s-company, which had been landed from the frigate at ‘Mutton-Cove,’ and marched in double file to the theatre, punctually at the hour appointed, where it was met by seamen of other ships, and many female friends, could little brook the delay which took place this evening, in consequence of the reluctance of the manager to commence the performance, prior to the arrival of his patron, Sir Harry Driver.

“’Pon deck, there!” cried a voice in the gallery—“why don’t you man the fore-clue-garnets and haul the fore-sail up?”

This was accompanied by a shout of acclamation, which clearly showed the proposal was in unison with the general feeling.—As the audience now became clamorous, the manager

was observed peering through a slit in the curtain, reconnoitring the look of the house, and anxious to prevent tumult.

“I say, shipmate,” continued the same boisterous railer, catching, to use a parliamentary phrase, the manager’s eye—“I say, if you don’t want your top-light dowsed, you’ll start out o’ that, and clue-up in time—here’s a thundering squall brewing astarn, as ’ill split that ’ere rent in your canvas from clew to earing.”

This prediction, no doubt, would have been verified, but for the entrance of Sir Harry, accompanied by two of his lieutenants, whose appearance gave a different direction to their volubility.

“Here’s the skipper—hurrah!—stand by for three cheers.”

“Aye, aye,” echoed several voices in the gallery.

“Hurrah—together, my hearties,” resumed the spokesman.

“Wait for the time,” cried the chief-boat-

swain's mate in the pit, now rising from his seat and hailing the gallery—

“Up! up! on your pins, every mother's soul o' you—Are you all ready?”

“*Go it, Ned,*”* cried half a dozen voices aloft; “go it like a good-un.”

The boatswain's mate quickly obeyed the summons, putting the ‘call’ to his mouth, and waving his left hand as the well-known signal was thrice repeated, accompanied each time by a shout from his shipmates, which shook the theatre to its foundation.

The curtain now rising, that most justly admired of all Shakspeare's tragedies, “The Moor of Venice,” commenced: in the course of which, it may be easily foreseen, passages occurred, that could not fail strongly to interest the feelings of many amongst an audience, composed, for the most part, of young per-

* A phrase since become deservedly popular, from its historical connection with a late splendid naval achievement.

sons who rarely enjoyed an amusement so pregnant with excitement.

In that part, where Othello's approach to the isle is discerned by some on the watch, who cry out, "A sail, a sail!" the hitherto peaceable demeanour and attention displayed by the tars, since the curtain rose, suffered some interruption from exclamations like these: "Point to her—Which way is she standing?—Turn the hands up, make sail,"—a cheer.

The play again proceeded uninterruptedly until the Moor arrived at the passage—

"And this, and this, the greatest discords be,
(Kissing the fair Desdemona)
"That'e'er our hearts shall make!"

"I'll bet a week's grog," said a clamorous topman, "the young un 'ill be a creole."

"Aye, sink 'em," said another, "there's the luck of your black fellows—Why, 'twas only 'tother day, I twigs the captain's steward in

tow with one o' the freshest-rosy-cheek'd craft
you'd see, from North-corner to Castle-Rag."

Hasty, who had ere this descended from the slips, and joined his friend, now jogged Burton's elbow, and remarked, in a whisper—

"Come! don't be down-hearted—if an old black man can weather on a young girl, why should you despair—for tho' you're no turban'd Turk, like Othello, you were always the devil among the women."

"It's more than doubtful to me, Othello ever was a Turk; though now-a-days he wears a turban," said Burton, who, as he rarely declined defending his sentiments, would perhaps, in another turn of mind, have discussed this historical query more elaborately.

Iago, in the drinking scene, had no sooner exclaimed—"Some wine, ho!" than there was a dissenting shout from both pit and gallery—
No! no!—Grog, O!"

"To be sure, Grog, O!" echoed several voices,

whose opinions on this subject, it is needless to observe, were in unison with the speaker's.

"That's *you*, bo," shouted a messmate from the back part of the gallery—"You're sick o' the black strap* too. D—— it, it always gives me the mullygrubs."

When the same personage in the drama had sung the song concluding—

"A soldier's a man,
A life's but a span ;
Why, then, let a soldier drink—"

Cassio exclaiming,—"'Fore heaven, an excellent song,'" the boatswain's-mate in the pit, standing up, as before, bellowed aloud—

"Now, my boys, reg'lar coal-box."

The harmonious spirits above caught, as if by inspiration, Cassio's sentiment, and uniting

* Very indifferent Port-wine, if at all deserving the name which was then served out at supper to the crews of his Majesty's ships, on the home station. In the Mediterranean, the lighter wines of the countries adjacent were substituted, which were nearly as bad. Under all circumstances, the practice of serving out wine, in lieu of liquor, was held in cordial abhorrence by our sailors.

their voices with a precision surprising, under the circumstances, struck into the well known chorus—

“ Very good song,
Very well sung,
Jolly companions every one—”

which was thrice repeated, to the total interruption of the play, and utter astonishment of that body in the house, denominated, in the phrase of St. Stephens, ‘the landed gentry !’

Burton, too, who was before impenetrable to all the mirth and waggerie of these eccentric beings, now seemed tickled by their extravagance, and was observed to laugh—a circumstance from which Hasty augured the most favourable results.

To the frequenters of the great theatres in the metropolis, who have witnessed the performance of this admirable tragedy, with eyes suffused with tears, and hearts throbbing with pleasing anguish, beneath the witchery of those great masters of the passions, Kean, Young, and

Kemble, it will seem a matter of astonishment, that any passage in this deep-dyed web of pathos and feeling, should afford to the mind a subject of amusement, much less of rude merriment and banter. But so it was ; the buoyancy of spirit, and thoughtlessness of this innocent and unsophisticated auditory, sent their fancy wandering from one idea which allured their attention, (for the sentiments were often beyond their comprehension,) to the next which was to them intelligible. The sense of the poet, thus taken in detached parts, was lost, and of course presented but imperfect, broken, and sometimes droll conceptions to the untutored mind. Hence it was, in that dark and treacherous scene, where Iago practises on the foible of a friend to secure his ruin, and rob one or other of his intended victims of life, the sailors seemed only delighted to find that gentlemen could become as ridiculous and helpless under the effects of liquor as themselves.

Cassio's silly speech, therefore, proved an exquisite relish to the audience, where he apostrophises Heaven—"Forgive us our sins," and endeavours to persuade his companion that he is sober. "Do not think, gentlemen, I am drunk ; this is my Ancient : this is my right hand, and this is my left hand :—I am not drunk now."—

"No, not *you*," roared a *Jack*, who no doubt would have been a willing witness in Cassio's defence, had he been brought to the gangway for inebriety.

"I can stand well enough," continued the representative of Cassio.

"Then—d—— it ! why don't you walk the *plank* at once, and prove yourself sober," vociferated a long-tailed wag, determined not to slip this opportunity of having a shot on the sly at his first lieutenant, who had only a night or two before put his perpendicularity to a similar test.

In this sort of *saturnalia* of the lower order, those whose lives are spent in dutiful obsequiousness, and obedient awe of their superiors, delight to avenge themselves for the privations and taciturnity inflicted on board in this respect, by telling their officers sometimes a little of their minds from some snug corner of the house, or masked battery in the gallery. Exemplary, indeed, must that officer be, who cannot thus occasionally learn something from hints of this nature, by some one under his orders ; who occasionally will avail himself of this opportunity to awaken the recollection, or disturb the self-composure of his superior, or commander. From whatever quarter these shots proceed, they are received with unconcealed glee and delight by the *Jacks*, who are quick in appreciating the character or peculiar foible of the subject of this embarrassing raillery.

Sir Harry, who was certain he had recognised the humorous offender by his voice, was con-

vulsed with laughter ; whilst the last sally was received with tumultuous applause. The actor, with that modesty which seems an *essential* in the histrionic profession, took the compliment of course to himself, and forgetting it was his duty to be drunk, stepped forward and soberly made three stiff staid bows to the house—a mistake which did not fail to set the better informed part of the audience once more in a titter.

As the tragedy degenerated into joke, the farce seemed more in earnest ; nor will this be a matter of surprise, since, in the latter, the audience were permitted to mingle in the performance with the actors ; and the zest might be considered to be heightened by the spirit of rivalry, with which one part of the house played up to the other. The contest was for some time dubious—for though the performers excelled in ranting, the blue jackets certainly eclipsed them in roaring.

At the conclusion of the fourth act the curtain

dropped.--The *real* business of the night now commenced. The bottle, but not the glass, went round, together with the healths of many female *divinities*, not named in any, save the sailor's mythology. Like Milton's Eve, the fair were "nothing loth;" they did justice to the toasts in honour of the sex: and might, without any great effort of imagination, be considered so many Hebes, from the alacrity they displayed in pushing about the jorum.

The sailors were now at liberty to disport themselves after their own fashion: and a confusion of tongues and voices ensued never equalled, since the far-famed babble of Babel. This over anxiety to create and circulate mirth and enjoyment, for a while defeated itself. A great authority observes, that

" Music is the food of love."

Most of them were victims to the *tender* passion.—The orchestra was, therefore, compelled "to play on," according to the momentary and fitful

preference of the arbiters and arbitresses of taste in the regions above. By a courtesy, for which the hardy sons of ocean are distinguished, the option was at once yielded to female taste—and a soft Syren of forty, and about half as many stone in weight, with eyes which had acquired an added lustre from the contrasted purple glow of her *marked* and commanding countenance, fixed at once their wavering choice; by calling, in a delicate *Soprano* voice, on the “musicianers to play up *Jack’s Delight*. ” This judicious call was hailed with enthusiasm.—The “College Hornpipe” followed, the devil’s-tattoo accompanying, drummed by the heels of the whole ship’s company, until the house trembled throughout.—Still the curtain remained stationary, owing to the sable hero of the tragedy having, in his anxiety to perform his part with spirit, forgotten how he had chidden Cassio, like whom he had himself “put an enemy in his mouth to steal away his brains.” This wight was now undergoing the penal process of having

his head soused in water, and being forced to ‘swill’ vinegar in large potions, in order to subdue intoxication, and restore him to his recollection of the part.

The audience having exhausted their stock of practical entertainment, and becoming fatigued with their own performances, which soon lost its zest from the circumstance of its no longer being a running accompaniment to, but a very inadequate substitute for the drama itself, became clamorous, and loudly vociferated for the rising of the curtain.

“I say, folksell, there;—why don’t you clew up the curtain?” said a young sailor, almost out of hail of female society, and whose situation was therefore the more likely to engender ill-humour. “Blow my precious limbs!—are we to wait here all night?”

A concert of cat-calls, groans and hisses followed, marked and loud enough to alarm the manager, who, apprehensive that some mischief might ensue to his property, opened the stage-

door and thrust out his friend Iago to appease the audience. He seemed to come forward with great reluctance—nor was it wonderful.—The orator's mission was to make an apology, and that apology was to be extempore. There was another reason why he should feel little at his ease. The moment he appeared, he felt he had no friend—*Jack's* prejudices against his conduct were insuperable. He had acted the part of the insidious assassin too well, not to fall under more than a suspicion, that he was naturally cut-out for the part. Having formed a rough calculation by the eye, of the numerical force of the sexes in the house, and finding the male predominated, he judiciously adopted a novel expression in opening his address:—

“ *Gentlemen* and ladies.”—This was an indig-nity offered to the fair which seamen were sure to resent.—A general hub bub and uproar ensued.

“ Where's your manners, you two-faced rascal ?” exclaimed one.

"Off—off—top your boom," cried another.

The ear of an actor is peculiarly sensitive to censure, even when undeserved; and there are well attested instances, where men of professional celebrity have, for peace sake, yielded their own good taste to the obstinate prejudices of the vulgar.—Iago retraced his steps and corrected his error; and, in defiance of the grammatical rule, as to which is the worthier gender, gave the post of honour to the fair, and recommenced—

"Ladies and gentlemen—"

This part of his address was repeated before he had arranged what was to follow.—He looked wistfully now to the manager (not to the *prompter* for the cue). He heard the "catch-word" indulgence; and proceeded—

"Ladies and gentlemen—"

"That won't do—none o' your gammon—you backbiting beggar," roared a topman.

Iago, however, resumed.—"The gentleman

—I regret to say—who has done us the favour—”

“ Has the *honour*,” was heard in an angry tone from the door-way.—The correction was instantaneous.

“ Who has the honour,” repeated the actor, “ to represent the part of Othello—before this—”
(pausing)

“ *Respectable* audience,” said the manager again.

“ Before this respectable audience, claims—ladies and gentlemen—your kind indulgence—”

“ Indulgence—be d—d.—You ought to be keel-hauled—you mischief-making beggar !” exclaimed the boatswain’s mate, in the pit.

“ For that gentleman, we solicit—that is, the manager solicits your indulgence.”

“ Curse you, I wish I’d gone out myself,” growled the manager, closing the stage-door, and leaving his ill-starred representative to that fate which already appeared pretty certain, from a shower of yellow rinds, which now descended

on the stage as thickly as the fruit itself be-strews the orange groves of St. Michael's after a hurricane.

“ But, gentlemen and ladies—I mean, ladies and gentlemen—the gentleman has been so overcome—(“Off, off”)—so excited from completely identifying himself——”

Here an enormous orange went bang past his head, which, luckily for his speech, he could not perceive, owing to his confusion and the glare of the lights on his eyes.—The missile struck the curtain with the report of that of a bass drum.—Although startled, the apologist continued—

“ So identified himself with the character—the—a—arduous character of the principal hero of the piece, that the manager trusts you will, ladies and gentlemen, excuse him, should he be *less successful* in the rest—a—the remainder of the part—”

Here he was preparing to make a parting bow to the angry, ill-peased audience, when a

shower of miscellaneous missiles descended on the stage, a short distance from him, and a well directed apple, robbed his head of the plumed Spanish hat and artificial curls, which concealed his baldness.—In evident alarm, not unmixed with rage, at this exposure, the aged personator of the young Venetian officer picked up his wig, and made as rapid a retreat as if the Turk or ‘Ottamites’ were at his heels.

Slowly now the curtain rose, Iago reappearing only to be afresh disconcerted by his discouraging reception in that revolting scene of flagrant treachery, where, whilst the already wounded and prostrate Roderigo is stabbed by him, the malignant and hypocritical fiend exclaims—“ Oh, villain !”

“ Kill men, i’ the dark—where be those bloody thieves ?”

“ Bloody thieves, indeed !—only hear *that* !” exclaimed several at once, whilst another swore with an earnestness which displayed intense *sentiment*—

“ Dowse my top-lights, if I wouldn’t make one to run that butchering beggar up to the yard-arm without benefit o’ clargy !”

This was too much for Burton.—The sombre gloom in which he had been wrapped so long yielded to the influence of the hour; and he could not refrain from laughing heartily at this pregnant proof of the simplicity of sailors’ habits of thinking, and generous warmth of feeling: a feeling, too, which, singular to say, had been excited by mere theoretic illusion.

But whatever excitation these honest susceptible souls had previously suffered, was merely as dust in the balance, compared with the tumult of grief, and paroxysm of rage, which filled every beating bosom, when the jealous Moor, now more savage by the remaining effects of liquor, unfolded, in the deep, impressive language of the poet, the deadly purpose with which he approached his sleeping bride.—The shouts became alarming. Volleys of im-

precations were hurled at his head—his limbs—his life.

“ What !”—said one of the rudest of the crew,—“ can the black brute cut her life-lines? —She’s a reg’lar-built angel,—and as like my Bet as two peas.”

“ Aye,” said a messmate,—“ it all comes of being jealous, and that’s all as one as mad;—but you know, if he’s as good as his word, he’s sure to be hanged,—that’s one comfort !”

When the Moor seized her in bed by the throat, Desdemona shrieking for premission to repeat but one short prayer—and he rancorously exclaims, in attempting to strangle her—

“ It is too late !”—the house, as it is said a French audience had done ere now, could endure no more; and the sailors rose in their places, giving the most alarming indications of angry excitement, and of a determination to mingle in the murderous scene below.

“ I’m d——d, Dick, if I can stand it any

longer," said the spokesman of the gallery.—" You're *no* man, if you can sit and look on quietly,—hands off, you blood-thirsty niggar," he vociferated, and threw himself over the side of the gallery in a twinkling; clambering down by a pillar into the boxes, and scrambled across the pit, over every person in his way, till he reached the noisy boatswain's-mate.—Him he 'challenged to the rescue,' and exclaimed—

" Now's your time, Ned,—Pipe the boarders away—all hands, damme! if you're a man as *loves* a woman.—Now go it," said he, and dashed furiously over all obstacles,—fiddles, flutes, and fiddlers. Smash went the foot lights—Cæsar had passed the rubicon. The contagion of feeling became general; and his trusty legions, fired with the ambition that inspired their leader, followed, sweeping all before them, till the whole male population of the theatre crowded the stage *en masse*, amid shouts of encouragement, or shrieks of terror:—outraging, by their mistaken humanity,

all the propriety of this touching drama ; and, for once, rescuing the gentle Desdemona from the deadly grasp of the murderous Moor, who fled in full costume, dagger in hand, from the house, and through the dark streets of Dock, until he reached his home in a state of inconceivable affright.

The scene of confusion which followed, it would be fruitless to attempt to describe.—All was riot and uproar.—The path of the invaders was strewed with ruin.—On the first alarm, the manager had sent for the military, who just arrived as the ‘boarders’ took full possession of the forecastle, and were in the act of giving three cheers as a token of victory. In such a state of excitement and triumph, it was natural to expect that order could not easily be restored.

The appearance of the red-coats aroused once more the riotous propensities and indignation of these champions of injured innocence. The attempt to dispossess them of that spot on which

they had conquered, was promptly resented.—A violent scuffle ensued—severe contusions were the consequence; and had it not been for the active interference of the frigate's officers in quelling the tumult, and the moderation of those who had arms in their hands, the capture of the ring-leaders would probably not have been effected without the loss of valuable life.

The stage was now deserted. Every actor had fled as though ‘the avengers of blood had been behind them.’ The simple-hearted sons of the sea were, by their own act, thus deprived of the Farce. But it could not be said they were disappointed. Every man likes to be the hero of his own tale; and the tars had concluded the evening *con amore* by a tragic entertainment, in which they congratulated themselves on having figured, very conspicuously, as the principal performers.

Indeed, after all was over, Sir Harry, whilst shaking hands with poor Burton, and welcoming his return, remarked—

" This affray should be a lesson to him hereafter," adding, with a laugh, " that the *Flora's* were too much of amateurs to be trusted in a theatre, lest they should abandon the service, and take to the stage."

CHAPTER VIII.

THIN POTATIONS.

I am for all waters.

SHAKSPEARE.

ON the evening of the second day after their departure, the veteran and his party arrived at their destination, and surrendering themselves to the pilotage of the post-boy, were set down at the Plough Inn, which, at that day, was as remarkable for being the resort of the most distinguished company, as for the exorbitancy of its charges.

Fatigued with travelling, the ladies, after an

early supper, retired to rest, and Tiller attended his master to the room set apart for his reception. Having so long been accustomed to sleep in a cot, he felt equally as uncomfortable on this, as on the preceding evening, in betaking himself to that, in his opinion, highly objectionable dormitory—a four-post bed; wondering once more how he could be so silly, or Tiller so stupid, as not to have stowed away a spare cot in the boot of the carriage, so as to ensure him one comfort at least, despite of his change of residence.—Tom endeavoured to console his master, by assuring him, that ‘if he could only find out in the whole town half a bolt of canvas, and borrow a needle and palm, he would knock him up, in less than eight-and-forty hours, a cot and canopy fit for a nabob.’

Reconciled, in some degree, by this assurance, and his *valef's* remark, that ‘these inland Hottentots understood nothing about the comforts of life,’ he prepared to undress himself, Tiller first carefully examining whether his bed

was well aired, and ‘ranging,’ as he termed it, all his master’s traps and rigging for the morning.

Like invalids in general, the old gentleman felt anxious to have the benefit of a consultation on his health, and, for want of better advice, called in that of Tiller.

“ Well, Thomas, I think I feel better already for the journey,” said Crank, with the tone of a man who makes an assertion for the purpose of sounding the sentiments of another

“ That may be, Sir,” answered Tom, who had now removed the gaiter from his master’s tender leg; “ but I can’t say I like to see this here swelling, Sir,” continued he, pointing to the limb which he raised for the veteran’s inspection—

“ Swelling!—aye, so there is, but there you’re wrong,—that’s all in my favour.”

“ You wern’t, I take it, Sir, always that way o’ thinking—partickler, when I had to clap on the parceling of a morning.”

“ Oh, but it’s a good sign, for all that—and

so would Mister Senna say, if he was here—he'd tell you, it was leaving the upper works—”

“ Yes, Sir, but it can't be in a worse place, than in your floor futtocks.”

“ That's as you think,” said Crank ; “ but I fancy myself better already.—It must be the change of air—”

“ Change of wind, Sir ?—Bless you, that can't be, she hasn't veer'd a point since we started.”

On this subject, Tom would have cavilled with the college of physicians, and despised the *dictum* of the Meteorological Society—‘ It was rank nonsense,’ he would say, ‘ to distinguish them,—air was wind, and wind was air, all the world over—’

“ Well, never mind the wind,” replied his master, “ we must now take to the water—and do you have a sharp look-out in the morning, and sound the well—”

“ What well, Sir ? ”

“ The well, man ! where the company drink the waters : you must take Boots to pilot you

—mind what you're about, and make me a full report of every thing on your return—I shouldn't like to lose any time—so I'll commence my course to-morrow."

In this instance, the simple-hearted commodore did not stand unsupported by authority. Many a votary of medical fashion has resorted to this region of renovation, equally uninformed as to the medical, and sometimes contradictory properties of the different species of water, issuing here from the bowels of the earth.—Like them he came to drink the Cheltenham waters, let them be what they might; as Antony "came to bury Cæsar, not to praise him." It is also in the recollection of the reader, that his visit was really unconnected with any bodily ailment whatever—and that to him such a journey, at this period of the year, was more likely to be productive of injury than benefit.

Armed with these imperfect instructions, Tiller was stirring betimes in the morning, and was seen making the best of his way down the

High-street, conducted by a lad, whom he had procured for the occasion, from among the stable boys.

The morning was overcast, with drizzling rain, which, added to the advanced state of the season, occasioned the street to be less thronged than usual; but the company was sufficiently numerous, to render Tiller's appearance more singular by contrast. His *Cicerone* began to display the talent and intelligence he possessed, for the part he had undertaken, by pointing out, almost as soon as they set out, the localities and peculiarities of the place.

For the benefit of such of our readers as are, like Tiller, unacquainted with Cheltenham at that day, it may be necessary to premise, that this celebrated watering place consisted of a principal street, called the High-street, of about a mile in length. Near the centre of the town was situated the church, a venerable old pile, built in the form of a cross, with a steeple of proportions, so tall, spiral, and light, that it

had before this period, swerved from its perpendicularity, and has since been restored, after a model, strongly reminding us of that unique, though much calumniated spire in front of Langham Church. This stands in a church-yard, shaded by luxuriant limes, and intersected by the walks, which conducted the valetudinarian to a small bridge thrown over a rivulet, beyond which, the ‘well-walk,’ or grand morning promenade, commences. — In the centre was the principal well, known by the name of Mother Forty’s Well; from which the wags of that day used to say, the good old dame drew *aqua-fortis*. On the left of this well was a pump-room, frequented by the visitants, more particularly during damp weather, for the purpose of partaking of the water, which was pumped up, or conducted thither from the several springs. Beyond this, the splendid promenade was continued, between rows of noble elms, between which, at intervals, were placed garden-chairs, where the delicate female or sickly

invalid, sought shelter from the ardour of the summer sun. The effect of the *coup d'oeil*, in which so many fashionably dressed persons were observed moving to and fro, or saluting and conversing together in groupes, whilst the eye reposed on the graceful spire, closing the verdant vista, had always been considered peculiarly interesting and agreeable.

Crossing the churchyard, and leaving, as most persons do who repair to Cheltenham, the church itself behind him, he soon found himself in the well-walk, or grand promenade described. And he and his companion had hardly passed through the stile leading from the churchyard, ere the old sailor's attention was attracted by the tall stately trees which formed this handsome avenue. Tiller, than whom no dealer knew better the value of timber of this nature, interrupted the explanations of his loquacious guide, and exclaimed—

“ My eyes !” (by the bye, this was a favourite imprecation, if it might be called by so harsh

a name, in the old man's mouth, who always forgot he had but one)—“ My eyes ! . *there's* timber for you—What trees d'ye call them there ?”

“ They be elms, I reckon,” said his equerry.

“ What a sin, to see such fine timber a wast-ing in that sort o' way—Why, there's enough to lay down clinker-built boats for every ship in the whole British navy.”

“ Ah, thin, my ould buck, what d'ye know about the navvy ?—Sure you arn't after going to say, *you're* a sailor ?” interrupted a voice behind him. Tiller turned round, to face this jovial railer, for such the volatile effusion thus uttered in a broad Hibernian accent, proclaimed him to be. He was rather surprised, to find there was no stranger near him, except a tall, handsome young man, dressed in the very pink of the fashion, whose genteel exterior, and good humoured countenance, induced him to doubt he could be the utterer of the foregoing impertinence. His new acquaintance,

for the young gentleman seemed not to stand upon the ceremony of introduction to invest him with that title, and its accompanying privileges, was determined not to leave him long in the dark as to his identity, so renewed the attack *a la mode Irlandaise*, by starting this truly national interrogatory—

“ Sure a raal sailor wouldn’t be coming to look for salt water on the dry land ?”

Thus reviled on a professional, and therefore to him a sore point, the offended seaman darted on him a look of scorn, which unfortunately betrayed his optical defect, and opened to the voluble Irishman a fresh topic of mingled railery and invective.

“ I say, my sea Cyclops, what’s become of th’ other day light ?—Did you lose that in a skirmmage at Tower-stairs with the press-gang ? or was it part of a wallopping at Wapping ?”

“ No—you pye-awe—it’s part of a whopping you wouldn’t relish.—But *you* never smelt

powder, I warrant.—Did you ever hear—no, not you—did you ever hear o' the twelfth of April ?”

“ What twelft of April, my old Nestor of the deep ?” replied he.

“ Why—” returned the tar, with ineffable contempt—“ who the h—ll ever heard of any other but the *one*?—I knew ” added he, turning round on his heel, “ you were nothing more nor less nor an Irish tailor.”

Tom had hardly recovered from the effect of the hiccupping laugh, with which he closed this mutually complimentary colloquy, than he felt the tintinnabulum of his ear affected by a sensation which occasioned a crowd of juvenile reminiscences (albeit asleep for many years) to awake in his mind.—This inroad on his sensibilities was solely to be attributed to a strain which struck upon his organs of hearing—in other words, an instrumental band in the neighbouring pump-room at this moment struck up the well-known country dance, “ Drops of brandy—”

which so tickled his sensorium, that, to the astonishment of his stupid guide, and his mercurial antagonist, he placed his feet, mechanically, in what Vestris or Degville would have termed the first position, and exclaimed—

“ My precious limbs, what’s this?—Here’s a reg’lar-built-spree—why, this is almost as early as they begin at the back o’-the-pint*—Well, for once, I don’t care if I have a pen’orth o’ steps myself among the swells.”

Without further intimation of his intentions, the old sailor deftly tripped it along, and was soon lost sight of by his awkward guide amongst the gay world within.—His disappointment may be easily conceived, when, instead of finding the company engaged in dancing and boisterous mirth, such as that which the reader will perceive he had anticipated, from recollecting the effect of that enlivening strain on his merry

* Portsmouth Point—Celebrated for the number of Temples erected by Christians in modern times, to the idolatrous worship of Terpsichore, Bacchus, and Venus.

acquaintances of former days, he discovered they were men and women all engaged in soliciting liquor at the hands of certain females, who sat like priestesses behind an altar, or rather bar, within the ample saloon, attended by male satellites, who continued pumping up with might and main the nectarious fluid, of which all seemed so solicitous to partake.

Bustling forward amongst the crowd, as he perceived was the fashion in this miniature world ; where, as in the greater, every one, from the healthy, fresh-coloured Gloucestershire gentleman to the bilious invalid, or tawny Anglo-Indian, was struggling for precedence, and eagerly soliciting a preference at the hands of these fair dispensers of capricious favour ; he soon cleared his way through an assemblage which seemed little anxious to contend with so rude a suitor, and halted to take breath right in front of a young Quakeress, who was employed in serving the company.

“Come, come,” said Tom, rubbing his hands

with evident satisfaction, as he beheld the comely girl pouring from a green bottle into a large tumbler, a clear liquor, of whose ingredients he was ignorant, though sufficiently well known under the refined term “*solution*,” by amateur spa-drinkers, and chemical analyzers of the liquid on which they *live*—“Come,” said he,—“it’s easy to see, there’s more nor *water* taken in here.—Well, I’ll say *that* for the old woman, I never seed her take to drink so early in the morning.”—Here it may be doubted whether a fellow, who so licentiously could wag his tongue as to the reputation of the fair, alluded to his wife or his mistress.—“But, it seems,” continued he, “your quality may take their drops whenever they please.”

He was particularly struck with the singularity of the applications to be served, which were made, as it were, numerically, although sufficiently irregularly to puzzle him in endeavouring to account to himself why the higher numbers should often precede the less.

"*Four* for me," exclaimed one.

"*Two* this time," said a second.

A delicate damsel preferred a petition for *Three*.

A healthy, smiling votary of field sports, in a green frock coat, and equipped for the chace, the companion of the lady just mentioned, hesitatingly whispered in the fair Quakeress' ear:—

"Number one, my dear, if you have it," as if convinced the less he had of it the better.

But it was the frequent applications for the contents of the green bottle which bewildered the fancy of old Tiller, and confirmed his previous suspicion that the liquor contained in it was no other than his old favourite—gin. Still he was at a loss to understand, whether the number by which they regulated their calls had a reference to the persons themselves, or the number of waters to be mixed with their liquor.—He recollects, however, the practice in men-of-war, when, if any were missing at the time the purser's

steward served out the grog, he forfeited his call and was put down last in the list; so he prudently resolved not to lose his, and advancing briskly up to the marble table, applied in his turn, archly winking with his one eye at the girl, whilst he said, in a half whisper—

“ Naked for me, Ma’am.—You needn’t be shy o’ the bottle wi’ me.”

Here a scorbutic, bilious-looking patient applied for number *five*.

At this Tiller seemed rather disconcerted, but soon cheered up, and muttered to himself—

“ Well ! I’m glad to find they don’t go so far as *six-water-grog*.”

Whether through archness or simplicity, the female friend complied with the sailor’s request, and as the phrase runs in the well-walk, “ tipped him a drencher,” giving him a treble dose of the infusion.

Frost and thaw,—light and darkness,—fire and tow, were never such irreconcileable enemies as salt-water and the inner coats of Tom’s

susceptible stomach.—The first gulp went down perforce—the next was in his mouth but a second, ere it was expelled through his teeth, nose, and, it might be said, eye-lids, (for they too glistened with soft moisture,) with a force and fury that overwhelmed all present with dismay, and damaged many a dress of costly fabric and beauteous dye.

“ What !” said the enraged tar, his inside smarting with the triple saline draft, and his fury roused by the insult he imagined was now offered—“ What, ye *she-sanctifier*, d’ye think I haven’t had salt-water enough in my day,—but I must now swallow it here inland amongst a parcel o’ lubbers.—See here, you straight-haired jade—don’t come that rig over the captain—or I’m dowsed, if you do, but he’ll clear the decks, and make a clean sweep with his stick of every glass in the tap.”

Having thus vented his wrath on his fair enemy, the irritable valet made his exit, and repaired to his master’s bedside to report progress.

CHAPTER IX.

CEREMONIES.

All form is formless, order orderless,
Save what is opposite to Engi. nd's love.

KING JOHN.

DISPEPSIA, gout, and hypochondriacism, had chained our friend Crank fast to his bed, for ten days subsequent to his arrival ; during which period he had not failed to learn from Tiller, technically, and in due form, whether he had ‘ sounded the well’—‘ what water he had,’* —

* The term used on inquiring the depth of water in which a ship swims ; or, in case of springing a leak, the quantity within her hold.

and what was the description of persons he had met with in his cruize on their present station.

It is needless to say, that Tiller felt a pride in pouring forth his whole confidence into the bosom of the man whom, on earth, he most esteemed.—But, even had he not been so communicative, his singular and *outré* début in the well-walk and pump-room excited general curiosity, as to who could be, nautically speaking, ‘master and owner’ of so unique a being.—Taciturnity never had been Tiller’s *forte*.—He always liked to tell his mind, but more particularly where the subject was agreeable; when it might be easily seen that he was descended, by the mother’s side, from the far-famed Andrew *Marvel*. There was another cause, though not the primary one, why the commodore became so rapidly an object of interest, which was derived from the exuberant good feeling of the man towards his master. This requires explanation:—since his arrival at Chel-

tenham, though not that sort of active station on which he was likely to earn promotion, Crank had become a flag officer—not that he could appeal to Steele's list for his credentials, or that it had ever been notified to him by the secretary of the Admiralty, but that fame, the unbought herald of desert, had, through her trumpet Thomas, sounded his merits, and magnified his achievements to such a degree, that Tiller, and all who heard him, might have agreed in their own minds, that if he were not an admiral he *ought* to be one.—Tom felt, as he expressed it, that ‘amongst a set of inland know-nothing lubbers,’ he need not hesitate to impute to the veteran a degree of wealth corresponding to his accredited rank ; and to the latter circumstance may be attributed, in part, the very general disposition which was displayed to cultivate his acquaintance by the Oriental seekers of health, or the Occidental seekers of wealth, who may be said to constitute, almost exclusively, this Indian and Irish colony.

All this kindness and care, on the part of

Tiller, was destined to produce a harvest of annoyances to his master—nor will this be a matter of surprise, when it is recollected how singular the old gentleman was in his notions and turn of thinking.—The first shock his nerves underwent originated in a circumstance for which he could not at all account—namely, the visit of a gentleman, styling himself, as appeared by his card, “The Master of the Ceremonies”—a title which induced our old friend (who, like the Litchfield literary giant, would as soon have picked a pocket as sported a pun on another occasion) to remark with warmth—

“Master of the ceremonies, indeed!—He seems, Tom, to stand upon very little *ceremony*, in thrusting himself on people who want to know nothing about him.”

“No more do I, Sir,” said Tiller,—“every one knows there’s a master—a master’s-mate—and a master-at-arms;—but I’m blowed if I ever heard of such a rating afore as master o’ the *cerrymonies*.”

“ What !” continued Crank, “ shall a fellow I never saw in my life dare to intrude his acquaintance on his superior?—damme, its downright disrespect—contempt, by the Lord Harry—I wish I only had him in blue water—I’d teach him—”

“ I wish *we* had, Sir, and a few more on ‘em too,” said this pattern of fidelity, who just at this moment recollected the practical joke played upon his susceptible stomach, by the fair Quakeress at the pump-room—“ I wish we had, Sir, we’d teach ‘em better manners.”

Crank seemed still to chew the matter over, and at length exclaimed, like one who had just made his mind up—*I’ll* know the rights of this —tell the landlord I want him.”

Tiller perfectly concurred in opinion with his master, that an explanation, if not an apology, was necessary on the occasion; and whilst he asked him whether he would have pea-soup to-day, in the same tone of indifference, remarked that “ he had seen a man shot for less.”

The landlord in due time appeared, and was accosted, on his entrance, by the invalid, who rather angrily inquired—

“ What’s the meaning, Mister Landlord, of *all* this? You seem to be a strange set of fellows here:—devilish free! Here’s a chap has been here *three* times to-day already, bothering me with his cards; and, what’s worse, damme, if, after all, the fellow has left his name.”

“ Quite right, Sir;” said his host, “ I fancy you’ll find it all right.”

“ All right! What, to bother me three times a day, as if I havn’t enough on my hands to swallow those doses every two or three hours,” said Crank, pointing to the chimney-piece, where a formidable array of phials was displayed.

“ All right, Sir; I fancy you’ll find he only came once, Sir.”

“ Then why the deuce the three cards?”

“ A mark of respect, Sir—etiquette, Sir—a card for yourself, Sir: and a card, I fancy, for

each of the ladies ; besides, Sir, it's his business. You know, Sir, every one of those cards fetches him a guinea. It's all right, Sir ; he gets sometimes of a morning more out of the house than I do, who beggared myself to build it. But it's quite right, Sir.—If there was no Master of the ceremonies, there would be no rooms ; —if no rooms there would be no company ; —and if there was no company there would be no Cheltenham,” concluded this profound logician.

“A guinea each!—a guinea—hump ! I see.—It's well he doesn't come oftener.—Dreadful expensive place—why,—that's one-and-twenty guineas a week,—and if he finds this fellow of mine here 'twill be nearly thirty !—and all for *what*, I should like to know ?”

“ It's all right, Sir,” reiterated his host ;—“ but you're wrong, Sir ; for the three guineas are for the season. In fact, Sir, it is the only payment he gets in return for the attention and civility he pays to the company who attend his rooms.”

“ Curse his civility ! What, are people who come here for the benefit of their health to be compelled to pay *head-money* to a d—d dancing master for a bow and a scrape ?”

“ It’s all right, you may depend, Sir.—It’s not the only ceremony the gentleman contrives to master : he’s an excellent match-maker ; and what’s more, Sir,” continued the innkeeper, in a significant tone, “ he gets partners, I fancy, for many young ladies for life.”

“ Oh ! if that’s the case, I’ll warrant he’s hard work for his money : at least if the men are as hard to please as I was.”

“ Why, yes, Sir, if the easiest card he had to play was merely dropping his own at a gentleman’s door, ’twould be all well enough ; but you may depend on it, Sir, it’s very hard to be always doing civil when people are not paid for it.

“ That’ll do—that’ll do, landlord,” said Crank, whilst his host took the hint and retired.

“ Doing civil, indeed !” continued the veteran.

" Hang this fellow too, I suppose he'll be sending in a long bill for *his* civility."

" That he will, Sir," said Tiller; " and if you takes my advice, Sir, you'll never take none on it, and then you know, Sir, he can't have the face to *charge* you for it. Better cut and run, Sir, and take one o' them there flush-floor'd cottages like our own. You will have no trouble in going up and down ladders from one deck to another; besides, if you takes the water you'll have no time to——"

" What?"

Here Mrs. Crank entered, and interrupted Tom's explanation.

" Well, brother, I trust the chastising hand of Heaven has at length moderated its infliction!"

" Chastising! What d'ye mean? Have I broken any of the articles of war? One would think I had just received three dozen, and was cast off from the grating. You'd be a good friend to the master-at-arms. Talking of masters, perhaps 'twas you sent that Master o' the ceremonies here!"

“ Why should you suspect any such thing ? ” said the matron ; “ it is the custom every where for a Master of the ceremonies to call, on the arrival of a stranger—indeed it’s a mark of respect.”

“ Hang all such respect when a man pays for it. Three guineas is too much for any one’s cringing and bowing.”

“ Well, brother, custom is the arbiter in these cases. *Your* common sense, nor my fixed conviction of the folly of compliance will not effect the question. No one can feel a more conscientious disinclination to comply with regulations originating in worldly-mindedness and disregard of religion ; but at Rome we should do as Rome does, otherwise you might as well be out of the world.”

“ World ! what have I to do with the world ? I’ve left it these ten years ; but you, who are always talking of being *above* it, seem now to think of nothing else. Perhaps you mean to sport a toe at the ball, and think this fellow will

get you a partner—the landlord tells me he's a great match-driver."

"The insinuation, Captain Crank, is unworthy of both me and yourself; the only motive I can have in countenancing this vanity and folly, arises from an anxiety (in which I certainly will do you the justice to think you participate) that our dear, amiable girl should not feel herself neglected, or differently circumstanced from other young persons of her own rank. To that motive I hope, with all your singular prejudices, you will do justice."

"Why, for the matter, or the motive, that's neither here nor there; but I will say, you always feel about my child as I like you to feel; and if you were not such a jumble of religion and policy, perhaps I'd go further, and say, there was not a better mother breathing. So hang the expence,—*he* shall have his head-money."

Here the waiter announced that a party of ladies were in the adjoining room, who called to

pay their respects, and handed her a card, on which was written “Mrs. and the Misses Selby.”

Mrs. Crank immediately left the room to greet her visitants, who were old acquaintances, and formerly neighbours. The interview served to revive an intimacy, which had for some years been suspended. With these ladies there was a young lady just arrived from London, whose delicate state of health might almost be said to heighten the interest, excited by her speaking eyes, beautiful features, and fragile form. She was younger than the veteran’s niece, by about a year, and was second daughter of the Earl of Normanton. Her soft, easy manners spoke her gentle blood ; and her introduction into the best society, had eminently contributed to give the last finish to that which nature had rendered in all respects, save strength of constitution, perfection. Mrs. Hemans, a lady about Mrs. Crank’s own age, and aunt to Lady Helen, was now, for the first time, also introduced to the veteran’s

family.—As the latter were persons in a superior walk of life, the visit was highly acceptable to Mrs. Crank, who did her utmost to detain and interest them, as well as her previous acquaintances, who were distant relations of the earl.— It may be easily conceived, that this visit was in due time returned, and proved the commencement of an interchange of civilities, which, in a short time, introduced Mrs. and Miss Crank into the better order of society ; and from this circumstance, and possibly from the rumoured singularity of the as yet unknown old *admiral*, many of the visitants of Cheltenham became introduced, and subsequently called on the new comers. Most were prompted by curiosity in making this visit ; and not a few complied with the wishes of others more civil or curious than themselves, in the expectation that it might perhaps afford them opportunities to detect or expose the peculiarities or blemishes of their recently acquired acquaintance. None were without a motive : though it will be in

better taste to defer the explanation of its nature and object, at least for the present:—Some were agreeably surprised by the result of their visit, because they found, that notwithstanding all they had heard of the strange peculiarities of the commodore, whom they did not see,—that his sister-in-law was an intelligent, polite lady, of a fine commanding aspect and person, whilst her daughter, by her affability and beauty, won all hearts: others were as much mortified, because in the polite conduct, and steady demeanour of the mother, or the innocent gaiety of the daughter, they found nothing to disparage.—The younger visitants were in general so pleased with Emily, as not only to solicit the favour of her society, whenever she was at leisure, but circulated after their departure, so flattering a description of her beauty and sweetness of temper, as to create a corresponding wish amongst their acquaintances to share her agreeable society. It may easily, therefore, be imagined, that as she had already the charac-

ter of a beauty, and the repute of being a fortune, her entrance into society was not impeded by any of those bars, which oppose young ladies, who cannot boast either of these attractions.

The curiosity which had been awakened as to Crank, was soon destined to be gratified.—A fine morning, and a slight respite from pain, at length enabled the veteran to appear in the well-walk, to make his observations on the place and company in person. Being unable to walk, he came in that sort of conveyance, so common at Cheltenham, a wheeled-chair, which was drawn, or rather propelled by Tiller ‘abaft,’ whilst the invalid, with a good humoured smile at the singularity of the conveyance, took the helm in hand, and steered himself according to Thomas’s pilotage.

Tiller, who was expert at ‘cunning’ craft of every description, and who directed the course of the veteran’s chair, afforded to many consider-

able amusement by his technical language and singular deportment.

"Mind your port-helm," said he.—"Keep the steeple open with the trees—there we are, Sir,—right in mid-channel—steady—e—a-starboard with all, Sir."

"Starboard it is," echoed the commodore.

"Starboard *yet*, i' you please, Sir."

"What, still? why,—she gripes most confoundedly, Thomas!"

One or two of those, nice bilious and interesting looking, gentlemen, who had taken their "*second tumbler*," and already experienced some squeamishness in the abdominal region, seemed suddenly 'taken aback,' as if they sympathized with this nautical allusion; and were perceived as suddenly 'altering their course.'

"Gripes *very* much indeed," repeated the veteran.

"Well, Sir," said Tiller, "we must only brail up abaft.—But if we gripe now, what 'ill

it be byne bye, when we come to take in our water!"

"Why, yes, Thomas, we musn't bring her too much by the head."

"I know it brought many *there* oftener than they wished to'ther morning."

Notwithstanding the anxiety Crank had expressed, to betake himself to the use of the waters as speedily as possible, he made the circuit of Mother Forty's Well without 'shortening sail ;' and even coasted all round the adjoining pump-room without coming once to an anchor. The singularity of his appearance had, from the first, rendered him an object of very general observation. The crowd which surrounded his chair, with looks which simply denoted their surprise, soon rather unceremoniously began to put questions to each other, little complimentary to their own delicacy, or the veteran's feelings. The smile, which had become general, soon relaxed into a titter of laughter amongst the younger and more thought-

less part of the *cortege*. This was too much for his keen sensibility to ridicule; and this man, by nature bold as a lion, and who, through the impulse of duty or glory, would now in the decline of life cheerfully have run the gantlet through the fire of an enemy's fleet, was diverted from his steady purpose by their rude curiosity ; and soon took to flight, abashed by the petty impertinence of a crowd composed chiefly of silly nurse-maids, and sillier children.

Tiller, in compliance with the commodore's commands “to put about, and make all possible sail on the craft,” whirled him along in silence at a rapid rate—the veteran shaping his course homeward, vowing that “he would rather at once be d——d than stared to death.”

CHAPTER X.

NEW CHARACTERS.

A young unmarried man, with a good name
And fortune, has an awkward part to play ;
For good society is but a game.

BYRON.

THE good people of Cheltenham, but more particularly that part of its female population, consisting of young ladies who had hands and hearts to give away, or mothers who had marriageable daughters to dispose of, was, about this time, put into that agreeable sort of excitation, so often the result at watering-places, of the appearance amongst them of a new face with the repute of a large fortune.

Having mentioned the class of persons likely to be affected by this arrival, it will be easily conjectured, that the individual now about to be introduced was a hero, not a heroine.

Independently of the courtesy, which permits writers of novels to dub, with the title of hero, the principal personages who figure in their mimic drama, this new male acquaintance had other more legitimate claims to that title—He was an officer, just returned from our army in India, in which he had distinguished himself, and obtained a majority at a rather unusually early period of service. But these objects were considered as of comparatively small importance, by the bright eyes of Cheltenham, when put in the scale with other qualifications he possessed, to conciliate the favour of both young and old. He was young and handsome — and through the preference of a deceased friend, altogether unconnected with him by family, who, being childless, had left him his heir, solely on condition that he should

adopt his name; he was rich, and sported all the attributes of wealth, which were in themselves sufficient to render him a favourite with the seniors of the sex.

Among other subjects of conversation introduced, when Mrs. Crank and her daughter last called on Mrs. Selby, the wealthy young major was mentioned.

"Have you, Mrs. Crank," said the latter, "seen our last arrival from India?"

"No," replied Mrs. Crank, very unaffectedly, "I never read that part of the papers—not, to my knowledge, having either acquaintance or relative in that quarter of the globe."

"Answered with precision, and to the very letter,—I protest!" said Mrs. Selby—"you speak, as Shakspeare would have said, 'by the card.'"

"Oh, Ma means," said the eldest of the young ladies, "the late arrival at Cheltenham —You know the grey horses and handsome curricle."

Here a matter-of-fact lady present could not refrain from laughing, whilst she inquired—

“Why such things should be brought from such a distance—have we not better here?” said she.

“Oh, you mean, child, better curricles and horses—True—but the arrival I mean, is the major who drives that handsome equipage—and whom you might have seen yesterday, parading between turnpike and turnpike.”

Their visitants, not yet appearing to recognize, from this description, the gentleman alluded to, the younger of the Selbys simperingly remarked—

“Oh, Major Hervey—the handsome major—he danced with Lady Helen at the rooms, the other night.”

“Yes,” said Mrs. Selby, looking significantly at the senior lady of the party; “he’s considered quite a *catch*—already he goes by the name of the young nabob—we shall have all the girls cocking their caps at him.”

"A nabob," said Emily, inquisitively, "I always understood nabobs were a sort of eastern princes—rich old men."

"Aye, but here's a young one," remarked Miss Selby.

"Yes, and extremely handsome, too," said her sister. Why, mama, he doesn't look as if he was much burnt with the sun."

Here the lady's mother observed, "he was a little dark, to be sure—but you know dark men are always considered the handsomest."

"I don't think I should be afraid to go out myself to my uncle, next season," said the younger, "only those shocking *coups de soleil*."

Here her mother interrupted her volubility, remarking—

"No, Maria, there's no necessity for such haste either—I hope, my love, there is better fortune for you in store."

This conversation was interrupted by Mrs. Selby acquainting her friend, they were preparing to go to the rooms the succeeding

night, and asking her if she intended to be present.

Mrs. Crank, under other circumstances, would have declined this invitation, as unsuitable to her serious habits—The terms, however, in which the major had been mentioned, and the very little probability of his being introduced to her daughter, by a lady who already set her heart on him for her own, decided her wavering resolution, and determined her ‘to walk in the ways of vanity’ for once, and accompany her daughter.

The wished for night approached ; the Selbys were early in the field, and appeared, as far as ornament and expense were concerned, to have spared no pains in heightening their attractions ; forming a striking contrast with the graceful simplicity of Emily’s attire, who now joined them. Mrs. Crank remarked, with no small pleasure, the sensation created in the room on their entrance. Possibly she did not attribute it entirely to the charms of her daughter, whilst the cordiality of the Selbys experienced

some drawback, probably from certain twinges in the region of the spleen, at witnessing how little nature left for art to accomplish in embellishing their young friend.

At that unrefined period of our history, we are ashamed to confess, the most elegant society of the day had so little taste as not to feel itself at all degraded, by applying themselves to those rude, though wholesome exercises, commonly yclept ‘country dances;’ and from the motley assembly of *demi fortunes*, and fashionables at Cheltenham, to the first nobility of the metropolis, and even the heiress of these realms, young persons constantly amused themselves in a pastime, which would now be considered derogatory to the delicacy of the veriest *grisette*, or mantua-maker, who weekly quadrilles it at Brewer-street rooms. But such is ever the unaccountable fickleness of fashion.

During the promenade, which usually precedes the formation of the “sets,” their party was joined by the master of the ceremonies: and

Mrs. Crank, by that affability which she was always able to assume, so far recommended herself, that he felt animated by a wish to obtain for her daughter, what he termed “a desirable partner.”

The lady expressed her gratitude for his kind intention, which, she admitted, was the more necessary, as they were quite strangers at Cheltenham. She subsequently, however, availed herself of the distinction he had drawn as to a “desirable partner,” and begged he would be particular in his selection, as there were but too many adventurers to be found in all public places.

During this short conversation, the eyes of Mrs. Selby and her daughter were involuntarily turned to the entrance door, as though in expectation of some valued acquisition to their party. Mrs. Crank could not avoid witnessing this anxiety ; nor was she destined to hesitate long as to its object ; for soon after the star of the ascendant made its appearance, and the hero of

the Indies and ingots entered the ball-room, accompanied by one of those obsequious servants out of livery, whose assiduities are considered to be more than repaid, by the fleeting favour of the hour, and a general invitation to dinner, of which he never failed to avail himself. In fact the latter was of that respectable class of ephemeral insects, ever seen basking in the sunshine, denominated led-captains.

The Major, after having surveyed the room much in the manner of an eastern sultan, accustomed to the ceremonial of the handkerchief, his subsequent conviction accorded with his first impression on entering the room; and repairing immediately to the master of the ceremonies, he turned the conversation on Emily, and begged to be introduced. Although the Major, like all other Indians, was a victim to the lassitude so inseparable from a residence in an enervating climate, he had determined to brave all the hazards resulting from such an application, even though, as he expressed it, “con-

demned to dance," rather than forego the pleasure he expected to reap from an intercourse with one who realized all the fabled loveliness of an eastern Houri. A proposition so in unison with his own predetermination, as well as with the sentiments and wishes of some of the parties interested, was not long in abeyance : suffice it to say, that the Major was introduced to Emily. What was his success during the evening, or in his subsequent endeavours to render himself acceptable in her eyes, will be with greater propriety reserved for future details.

CHAPTER XI.

PAY-DAY.

Falstaff. Thou dost give me flattering busses.

Doll. By my troth, I kiss thee with a most constant heart.

Fal. I am old, I am old.

Doll. I love thee better, than I love e'er a scurvy young boy
of them all.

Fal. What stuff wilt thou have a kirtle of? I shall receive
money on Thursday. Thou shalt have a cap to-morrow.

HENRY IV.

IT may be presumed, from the urgency with which Staunch summoned Burton's services, he had little leisure to pine in moping melancholy: both his superiors having determined, it would be very desirable he should be kept as busily occupied as possible, in order to counteract that depression of spirit, which they witnessed with

so much concern. The various duties attendant on fitting out—comprising ‘dock-yard duty’—‘taking the guard’—‘answering signals’—the monotonous return of delivering the ‘daily progress at the Admiral’s office,’ all devolved upon the languid lover; whose spirits must have proved unequal to the task, had he not been cruelly, as he thought, but humanely, as his friends believed, spurred on to more than ordinary exertions by their joint contrivance.

Their new ship had been now reported ready for sea; and an air of agitation,—an indefinable tumultuous feeling in and about the brig, seemed to betoken her probable departure, with something of the same certainty which induces a sailor to foretell the approach of stormy weather, from its agitated precursor—the ‘ground swell.’

Nor are these symptoms confined to terrestrial indications only—for, as in the observation of natural phenomena, the sailor is wont to look to the sky, in order to fortify his speculations

discernible from the movements of *celestial* bodies, including the sign ‘*Virgo*,’ occasionally terminating in ‘*Scorpio*,’ which as clearly foretel a certain *moral* phenomenon.

Have you ever, reader, seen a pay-day on board a man-of-war?—

If not,—though you may have reached the sources of the long undiscovered Nile, or slaked your thirst despite of the Guardian Dragons, at the fabled fountain from whence the mighty Niger begins its course across the thirsty waste of Africa;—though, with praise-worthy curiosity, you may have climbed by star-light the snow-clad heights, and dared the fearful avalanches of Mont Blanc, to witness from its summit the awful glory of the rising sun;—or gasped for breath, in the dangerously-attenuated atmosphere of the loftier Andes, or Himaleyan range, you may console your ambition of novelty by the reflection that there is something yet to be seen; and that the kingly sage laboured under a very

erroneous impression, when he exclaimed

“ There is nothing new under the sun.”

’Tis true, Tarshish, in Solomon’s day, was but a paltry type of Portsmouth or Plymouth, in ours: and his boasted ships were mere “ jolly boats” to our “ first rates”—The error may therefore be venial in him; but fall not, curious friend, into the same mistake; but hie thee to Spithead or Plymouth Sound, the first time a pay-flag is seen flying at the mast-head of any of our ships of war: and, if not instructed by the wily sagacity displayed by the arch enemies of poor Christian sailors,—

“ Duller should’st thou be than the fat weed,
Thatrots itself in ease on Lethe’s wharf,”

not to be highly amused at the simplicity and gullibility of their ill-fated customers—the sons of the ocean.

During the week previous to pay-day a wonderful revolution is observed to take place in as to the future—so there are certain indications

the feelings and conduct of a large portion of his majesty's profit-loving lieges—bearded and beardless.—The fair residents of the place assume a gentleness of manner and a decorous propriety altogether inconsistent with the usual attributes of this class of the softer sex.—A kind and *affectionate* intercourse is observed to subsist between couples in every berth, and on every hatchway throughout the ship's decks—The soft syren, who, on her first embarkation, through delicacy had ‘never told her love,’ or given other proof of affection to her swain, than those striking evidences of a pugnacious spirit, discernible in the scratched cheek or blackened eyes of her spouse, is now seen the live-long day sitting in amorous fondness with her rugged-muzzled swain on the fore bitts, or lolling on the combings of the hatchways, innocently twisting round her fingers those long love-locks, the cherished ornament of poor *Jack*, who believes her often-plighted oath, that—“*he* is the only man she ever *could* love.”

Thus the war-worn son of ocean, simply wondering at the change, dissolves in dreams of love, and forgets all his toils, as Hercules did his labours, in the soft lap of a British Amazon.

Such are the celestial signs from whence it may be inferred that an important revolution in the posture of affairs is likely to take place.

But these portends are not confined to the fair afloat. Light breaks in from various quarters.—A tone of civility and kindness is assumed by persons previously strangers to both. The watermen are all on the alert. Not a bum-boat-woman in the place neglects to make her way alongside the ship, and armed with a letter of introduction, or the more dangerous artillery of the eyes of a handsome young niece or daughter, who never fails, on such occasions, to accompany her, endeavours, with many a smirking contortion of face, to gain the officers' permission to attend the ship on the wished-for day.

But the most certain indications of the near approach of this most auspicious period are dis-

cernible from the conduct and demeanour of the antient people of Israel. This cunning tribe, with unerring certainty, are able to fix the date of the payment of any ship, through the medium of agents in London, or persons in public offices, into whose confidence they never fail to worm themselves. Indeed it may be said, that such is their sagacity, that they are in possession of this valuable, and to them important, secret, much earlier than the ship's commander, or any officer under him.

For about a week previously these equivocal indications of respect and civility from the Jewish tribe, had been witnessed by all the officers of the *Spitfire*. And here it is remarkable, that in proportion as these were heaped upon the brig's officers, those of the *Flora*, (the last ship paid,) and from whom, therefore, there was neither profit nor advantage to be expected, were treated with the utmost surliness and contemptuous indifference by these arch hypocrites ; though formerly, in their turn, assailed by the

same obsequiousness, artifice, and cajolery, as had been practised on Staunch and his officers.

‘ Two bells’ of the forenoon watch had been struck, and Burton, now late with the ‘ report of guard,’ was making his way from the ‘ admiral’s hard,’ to the office, when he was interrupted in his progress by a shoal of these sharks, who fawningly addressed him, and

“Bending low, and in a bondsman’s key,”

solicited his permission to be allowed to come on board, the day next but one ; the first positive intimation, by the bye, which he had heard that the ship was then to be paid.

The applicants were so numerous, and yet the forms of application so similar, that a specimen or two would almost suffice for the whole tribe.

“Cot bless you, Captainsh,” said a rabbi, of the first class,—and here, let it be observed, that, on this auspicious occasion, as well as on the accession of a new monarch to the throne, a very

general promotion takes place throughout the navy—particularly among the lieutenants, who are all dubbed captains.—“Cot bless you, Captainsh—it dosh my heartsh cood to she you—Phatch can I do for you to sherve you or shave you expenshe?”

“Nothing, my good man,” said Burton, whose hurry induced him to be peremptory, in declining this questionable civility. He had little reason to congratulate himself upon his success in shaking off this obsequious follower,—another more eager than his fellow thrust the card of his shop into his hand, and begged permission to be allowed to serve the ship’s company with slops.

Endeavouring to clear Scylla, he tumbled into Charibdes; for a bolder specimen of the tribe, seizing him by the arm, with marked anxiety, also presented his card, swearing—“Sho elp, my Cotsh, I av it in my poursh to sharve the shemen, full shixty pur shent. sheeper till any von elsh in de drade.”

"Exshept me," said a fourth, whose card was as ready as his contradiction,—"I alvays sharves dis shentle'm.—Don't I, mahuns ke poora?"

"Damn your hunts—don't hunt me—I'm too busy to jabber Hebrew to you," said the lieutenant, who, in endeavouring to disengage himself from the enemy on the right, was assailed by a solicitation of a more insidious nature from a portly rich Israelite, who, eying his tarnished epaulette, imagined he had a suitable bait in reserve; and catching him by the collar of the coat, whispered, in a tone of more seductive softness than is usually the attribute of his nation:—

"Letsh me makesh you a preshent of an epeletsh.—I've cot such a nische on--'Twill fit you to a hairsh—veersteans du ma huns?"

Assailed as Burton's virtue was on all hands, the reader will perhaps sympathize with him in the feeling which prompted him, when at length liberated, to exclaim — the Lord be praised !

When the mere preparations for pay-day were in themselves so formidable, the reader will only think it a proof of becoming modesty in us to decline that which must be a very inadequate attempt to depict the turmoil, bustle, and uproar which characterised the proceedings of the day antecedent to the *Spitfire's* going to sea; or, what would be still more difficult, the passions and prejudices, on the one hand, and utter want of principle or decorum, on the other, elicited during this conflict of interests. Suffice it to say, that Burton found the prophecy of the sapient Israelite fulfilled. On the day mentioned, the pay-flag was hoisted—the commissioners came on board—the seamen's accounts were overhauled and adjusted. The debtors, both male and female, crowded the deck, which presented a scene like an eastern bazaar—the spaces between the guns being occupied as “stands” by the different firms of Moses,—Levi,—Jones,—Aaron,—Mordecai,—and Solomons, the remnants of their outcast tribes;—and the refuse of ages.

Until sunset of that day, this marine fair was kept up with surprising spirit, despite of the constant interruptions occasioned by the shoals of Jews and Jewesses, who were not included in the permission to come on board, attempting to force their way through the port-holes, or carry her deck by storm. The “young gentlemen” of the ship having fatigued themselves to surfeit, in administering scalding hot pea-soup to their Jewish invaders by means of the ship’s fire-engine, or heaving wads, and sometimes cold shot, into the boats that came perforce alongside. Nor was it until the Jacks had got rid of almost all their paper, and the Jews of their “*slops*,” in which, strange to say, is always included a large quantity of ardent spirits, that “our peoplish” collected their effects, and returned on shore to calculate their profits. The ladies, too, “rigged out” in finery, highly creditable to the taste of their lovers (the substantial pledges of that constancy which these turtles had reciprocally sworn to each other),

after whining, blubbering, and hugging, in proportion to the pin-money, or the liberal provision made for present and future wants by their indulgent spouses ; sobbed *affectionate* adieus, and were seen retiring in the boats—“waving their lily hands ;” whilst a few others, disappointed in their extravagant expectations, forgot their plighted love in their wrongs ; and very significantly immersed their digits in the sea, and devoutly thanked heaven—they had “well washed their hands of the shabby carn.”

Though it may be fairly inferred that irregularity and ineptitude were amongst the consequences of a scene like this, by day-break next morning, the utmost order and propriety were observable in every department on board ; and before “piping to breakfast,” the *Spitfire* was discovered, under a heavy press of canvas, stretching down Channel with a favourable breeze.

CHAPTER XII.

DEVOUT LOVERS.

And then there are such things as love-divine,
Bright and immaculate, unmixed and pure,
Such as the angels think so very fine ;
And matrons, who would be no less secure,
Platonic, perfect.

BYRON.

CRANK no sooner found himself able to navigate his ship about Cheltenham, as he termed the wheel-chair, than he employed himself, jointly with Tiller, to procure for his family a house, in which he might be his own master,

and less exposed to the intrusion of strangers. The environs of this delightful place abound with small detached villas and rural boxes, amid gardens and plantations; which, to suit the convenience of the ever-changing population of the place, are let or hired, ready furnished. He was not long in obtaining the accommodation he required; and having discharged the enormous bill contracted during their stay at the inn, his coxswain received orders to shift his flag to Clarence Lodge; with which the latter very gladly complied, being almost as tired of running up and down stairs at his time of life, as his superior was of the noise and bustle of an hotel. Here, too, Mrs. Crank's genius was more at liberty to display itself; and she soon found herself, as most persons will, who can afford to entertain their friends, surrounded by a considerable party, or knot of persons, whose habits of thinking and acting were more congenial to her taste, than to that of the fastidious commodore. Amongst those,

whose morning calls or attendance at her serious *soirées* were most frequent, was a preacher of some celebrity in the neighbourhood—at the foot of whose pulpit she almost every evening sat, to examine his doctrine, or profit by his precepts.

He was a man by no means in extremes, and corporeally, mentally, and in his circumstances, was destined to feel the full value of the happy mean. In age he was about five-and-forty—and whilst others, at this period of life, generally put on flesh, he, whether from personal mortification (though such is not, happily, the practice with divines since our separation from the Church of Rome), or from severe application to study, and the duties of his station, exhibited no inclination to obesity of figure.

It has already been observed, that Mrs. Crank, though verging into the wane of life, was still possessed of many attractions, more particularly in the eyes of a man, who, as

regarded society, might be said to have “sprung from the ranks.” It may be safely affirmed, that the attentions of men in a more exalted rank are proportionably agreeable to women; by a pardonable analogous reasoning, it may be also inferred, they must be influenced by the deference or homage of men in dignified station. The poet saith—“A saint in crape is twice a saint in lawn.” To this feeling, therefore, may perhaps be traced the effect produced by the deferential preference and marked homage of the eye, which this sanctified personage knew so well how to launch with effect at a particular individual in his congregation, from the elevated station he filled in the execution of his high calling. His address consisted in pointing these attentions with so much delicacy and caution, that they were scarcely detectable by indifferent persons, and only revealed by imperceptible degrees to the fair victim intended to be fascinated by the bland persuasion of his oratory, and the mute eloquence of his eye.

As the preacher possessed a considerable share of both these powerful engines of influence, he became soon so great a favourite, through the joint influence of his harangue and his obsequiousness, that he had established himself rapidly on a footing of familiarity and confidence at Clarence Lodge, with all save the veteran and his coxswain, from which he already augured the most favourable results. Nor must it be concealed in candour, that the fair one, though not of the tenderest age, nor of a disposition the most susceptible of soft impressions, could not but acknowledge to herself, that, whether from his doctrinal purity as a minister, or from his prepossessing qualities as a man, he was fast gaining on her good opinion; if not likely to supplant very soon the only person who, for the present, could be considered to stand in his way.

The reader will not be surprised to find that, in this instance, as in others of a similar nature, ‘things went on swimmingly,’ and that Doctor

Styles, whilst ruminating in secret, or canvassing with himself, the pure principles of platonism, was already up to the ears in love ; and almost drowned ere he could persuade himself he was out of his depth.—But here the reverend (for these people have the arrogance to usurp that title) Doctor, it appeared, ventured to found the structure of his hopes upon a foundation too frail to resist the effect of coming in collision with so strong a mind as that of Mrs. Crank.—She viewed this nondescript passion in a very different light from that in which her *reverend* friend could fain have represented it.—She considered platonic affection as a *trap* for the young and unwary.—The dangers to be apprehended from an indulgence in a feeling so romantic were occasionally the theme of her powers of description ; and she had often closed the pretty mouth of many a fond fair one in a female coterie, by an observation, in which her terror of the passion was condensed in the form of an

instructive apothegm—namely, that she suspected this insubstantial airy nothing, called platonic love, was too often the parent of substantial platonic children.

With a degree of tact, which showed him to be initiated in the *arcana* of human nature, and the sinuosities of sentiment, the reverend gentleman changed his ground, and assailed her by abject flattery, and the most unequivocal expression of preference.—He often contrived to turn their discourse on the solid satisfaction and purer happiness which religious couples must derive from a union to which they were prompted by other and higher motives than those which actuated mere ‘outer-court worshipers,’ as he chose to denominate those who did not conform to the exclusively-saving principles he professed.

Attacked at every salient angle, the female fortification insensibly began to testify the besieger’s power; the outworks were carried in

succession ; and although there was no probability of a surrender at discretion, the wily assailant had already calculated with himself the terms of capitulation.

CHAPTER XIII.

AMATIVENESS.

But, oh, the curse of wishing to be great;
Dazzled with hope we cannot see the cheat.

JUVENAL.

A modest hope—but modesty's my forte.

BYRON.

THE reverse of the sailor's adage, 'after a storm comes a calm,' is equally true as the adage itself.—Every thing had hitherto succeeded so precisely according to Mrs. Crank's wishes, that she became not only reconciled to the journey, but even pleased with the consequences which had arisen out of it. Her quiet, however, was destined to be invaded from a quarter she little expected—her bosom friend—

if thus may be designated the person to whom we, in our embarrassment, unbosom ourselves.

The reader is not to imagine the Dartmouth apothecary confined his practice solely to his country patients, or the professional drudgery of braying drugs in a mortar; and may have already perceived that Senna had calculated well with himself the value of a matrimonial connexion with the matron, and determined to obtain her hand—but here it would seem he had reckoned without his host.—Since that lady had remarked to a ‘band-sister,’ who had ventured to prophesy the probability of their union, that the doctor had mis-read that well known injunction—“to set his affections on things above ;” and placed them on things above *him* ;—a mis-quotation which did not fail to elicit a gentle rebuke from her ‘soul’s companion,’ who condemned this allusion, as an instance of the levity into which even well regulated minds were naturally betrayed when involved in considerations of ‘creature love.’

This saintly scruple was parried by an assurance, which will readily be accredited by those who have perused the sketch before given of Mrs. Crank's character, ‘that she never permitted any such earthly feeling to interpose between, or obscure her view of the greater and more important ends of her being.’

Of all this, however, Senna was ignorant. Ever since the altercation which is detailed in the chapter, entitled “Secret Services,” where the doctor, as an equivalent for his concession and acquiescence, in the banishment of Crank from his home, obtained a promise from the lady of the most “*ample* remuneration,” that gentleman devoted his days, and a portion of his nightly meditations to deliberating on the means he possessed to ensure the fulfilment of a pledge which, though so solemnly given, was still so ill defined.

To have been more intelligible, would not have suited the lady's purpose: yet, without his co-operation, her project was almost impracti-

cable. It will be recollected, that she, therefore, in order to secure the doctor in her interests, displayed on that occasion, in addition to the capacity which she always possessed for the management of intricate matters, the address of a consummate actress; and that whilst Senna endeavoured to extract a more explicit promise as to the manner in which he was to be remunerated, she had parried his urgency by her affected confusion, and by expressing, in a simpering, soft voice, “her surprise at his not perceiving that, circumstanced as she was, *delicacy* must prevent her being more explicit.”

How credulous is man! How easily gulled into believing that which our nature or our interests prompts us to believe! On this shifting sand, had the shrewd apothecary raised the ponderous edifice of his future fortunes; for however lightly others may estimate them, the fortunes of the humblest must be deeply interesting to himself; and the dexterity of his female adver-

sary had foiled him in attempting to snatch from her, whilst in that embarrassing situation, a substantial promise of her hand in marriage, and by assailing his vanity, had fed his hopes with a shadow.

As has been said of a gift, there is more in the manner of bestowing it, than in the value of the thing itself; so, as the promise here was rather implied than expressed, and might be either explained away or revoked, its value, in this instance, depended entirely on the artifice and inuendo which accompanied it.

Notwithstanding all his self-love, the more he pondered upon his situation, the more reason had he to dread, that he should be over-matched by his proud enslaver. Resolving, therefore, to call in the aid of others, he, like any other pedant (in order to extricate himself from his embarrassment) had recourse to study: as if women, like the arts and sciences, were to be learned by books. Here again, albeit not eminently entitled to be classed with the *literati*, he felt an embar-

rassment, which none can so justly appreciate as the truly learned. The wisest man of the east, where Wisdom herself, 'tis said, was born, has observed, “in the multitude of counsellors, there wanteth not folly,” and the doctor was a man who, from his egotistical habits, was very likely to fall into the same train of thinking; for having turned over the pages of the “**POLITE LETTER-WRITER,**” and the “**UNIVERSAL,**” he found no precedent which at all embraced the features of his case. *They* were certainly peculiar; even *he* had too much taste not to turn with disgust from those stiff starched samples of amatory correspondence under the title of “*Letters of a Young Gentleman to a Young Lady, on their approaching Nuptials.*” Besides, neither he nor his mistress were comprised within the definitions. That from a “middle aged widower” to a “young widow” was equally inapplicable, Senna never having been a ‘Benedic.’ He had recourse to a novel not long published, intitled “*Religious Courtship,*”—

there he found a letter, but it was in so glowing a style, and savoured so much of the Canticles, that he might as well have taken up "Ovid's Art of Love," had he not known that should his plagiary be detected, the circumstance of Ovid's being a heathen would prove fatal to his own interests with Mrs. Crank. A production of a purer school was resorted to; but even the saintly models in "CŒLEBS IN SEARCH OF A WIFE," furnished no parallel in the present case. Two mornings had thus been fruitlessly wasted in *research*: on the third, in attending a young lady far advanced in a decline, and observing "Rousseau's Eloisa" lying on the table, of which he knew no more than that it was a *love-book*, he begged to borrow it, remarking privately to her mother, with a nod of sapience, "that such works were eminently calculated to increase irritability in a mind so sentimental, and consequently accelerate the circulation of the blood in a frame so delicate."

The volumes were abstracted, and to work he went.

If he despaired of availing himself of the former authorities, the subtle, though tender; metaphysical, though captivating style, of this wizard of human passion, was in his mind perfectly inapplicable. Eloisa and Clara were beings of another world—sublimated creatures of high-wrought fancy.—Mrs. Crank, though a saint, a woman of this world. Out of three thickly printed volumes, he contented himself with gleaning an epithet from each; of which, it will be perceived, he in his letter afterwards made a very judicious use—Between “my charming friend—Eloisa! thou most adorable object”—and—“dear partner of my soul”—his bewildered judgment faltered and hesitated, so long, that, as they lay before him, transcribed on pieces of paper, he at length determined that chance should decide his choice; and closing his eyes, made a circuit thrice with his hand, and completed the magic rite, by luckily pricking his pen on the first. Baffled in procuring for himself a perfect model on

which to construct the bark of all his matrimonial hopes, he sat down, taking care to exclude any possible interruption on the part of young Rufus, by locking the door; and flattering himself that he felt in a generous glow of mind, adapted to a Cytherean composition, he commenced penning, and finally signed, sealed, and delivered for post, the following draught, which, like many others, he had professionally prepared for his favourite patient, he endeavoured to render palatable to her taste, by adding *quantum suff.* of that saccharine material—flattery.

In consequence of having filled the sheet of paper to repletion, it will be perceived the doctor's letter commenced singularly enough, thus—

“ P.S. Private and altogether confidential.

“ Dartmouth, December 6th, 18—.

“ My charming, and, give me leave to add, most interesting friend.—I had flattered myself, that ere now, I should have been favoured with, to me, the gratifying intelligence of your safe

arrival; likewise by the assurance, that all symptoms of *that* complaint, or rather, let me call it, disease, whose consequences and effects you had so much reason to apprehend, had been, if not completely subdued, so far abated, as to leave little reason to dread a relapse.

"The object so much desired might, perhaps, after the removal of contagious material, have been accomplished without leaving Camperdown; but consistency on your part, as well as on my own, was at stake, and I therefore regretted we should ever have taken different views of the subject. When I had, as you, my charming friend, are aware, already conceded many scruples, some ~~grains~~ *of* indulgence was due to my anxiety to preserve professional character. Nor was I selfish in that anxiety, for as I am encouraged to hope—I approach the subject with a diffidence becoming the delicacy of the case—My languid pulse proclaims it—a *look* would explain it all—But why conceal it—'Tis due to us both to be brief—therefore I say, I am encouraged to *hope*—(I

never till now knew the value of *that* word)—yes, to hope, that one day, and that—dare I anticipate reciprocity in the wish?—may not be distant—But, oh, words! words!—how inadequate is language to express a *desire*, not more delicately entertained than ardently felt—yes, those only who have suffered them, can tell the unhappy moments of hesitative uncertainty, which attend the formation of a resolution to declare the sentiments of affection.

“Have I not always devoted myself to your wishes?—and though I have, therefore, made considerable sacrifices, they are of no value in the account, when set off against the sum total of happiness yet in store for him, who, whilst he acknowledges himself unworthy of so great an honour, yet aspires to nothing less than your plighted hand, and your charming person.

“I have, on this subject, thought much: thoroughly analyzed every feeling—dissected my heart; for, let me not disguise through false delicacy, that ever since *your pledge* I have looked upon you as my better half—nay, the dear

partner of my soul. In these anxious deliberations, my adored friend will find, I have consulted *her* interests more than my own.

" You are aware how ill it would consort with my reputation, professionally, to absent myself for any length of time from ~~the shop~~ my practice here. I am, however, disposed to concede in this instance, as well from notions of delicacy, as to shew you how much I consult your wishes on all occasions—and shall propose, in order to avcid all the inconvenient bustle of preparation, and impertinent curiosity of strangers and others on the subject of our approaching nuptials, if once they were announced in the neighbourhood as fixed, that as you are now at Cheltenham, this important matter might be concluded both with greater propriety, convenience, and, let me add, privacy *there*, than at our own residence, by my running over to you a couple of days, for I fear, however ardent my desire to prolong my stay, the calls of a female patient far gone, and by whom I am retained, will preclude the possibility of my

extending my visit longer than to consummate my happiness, and merge in the dear privileges of a husband, all those delicate feelings of friendship which have so long subsisted between you and

“ Your devoted,

“ SAMUEL SENNA.

“ N.B. Having obtained a frank for the day from my kind friend the member for Totness, and being barely in time for the post, I trust you will excuse the hurried and slovenly style of my communication ; but where feeling is correct, form may be dispensed with.”

The irritation which the receipt of this extraordinary effusion occasioned in the lady's mind may be easily conceived by the reader, who is already aware of the haughty character the doctor had to deal with. The dose was so far from being palatable, that she flung the letter in the fire, and determined, as the best way to shew her contempt for its author, not to condescend a reply.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CHACE.

“ A ship in sight !” with joy the tars make sail,
And spread the bellying canvas to the gale.

MOORE.

Love and glory are known to go hand in hand:
and even our engrossing predilection for female
society must not be suffered to divest us of all
anxiety for the fate or fortunes of our friends
afloat.

Some days had elapsed after the departure
of Staunch’s new vessel from Plymouth Sound,
to take up her station off the port of Bourdeaux,

ere any thing occurred worthy of particular notice. On the morning of the day alluded to, there had been a good deal of sea running, and, for this precise reason, the captain had, contrary to the general custom of the service, selected this opportunity for exercising the ship's company at the great guns, so as to inure them to the difficulties of this service under such circumstances. During the time the people were at dinner, which on board well regulated ships of war, occupies an hour and a half, Staunch was absent from deck. The fair reader will perhaps be inquisitive to learn how the gallant commander of the brig was just now occupied.

Considering the sharp appetite which the keen sea air imparts, they will not be surprised to hear that he sat alone musing deeply, and ever and anon devouring Bacon, which lay invitingly on the table before him. Not that our fair friends are to understand he was churlishly pampering his mortal part with a tit bit of that swine's flesh, whose relish is so agreeable even

to themselves, when placed on the breakfast-table in the form of ham. No—his was a regale of the mind: and he was depasting his immortal part with a slice of intellectual food from that Bacon, whose quaint essays have laid down, with admirable perspicuity, and with the happiest illustration, the great and original land-marks of true practical philosophy.

It is to be remarked, that every man is more or less professional in his reading; and thus it happened in the present instance, that although Lord Bacon was an equity lawyer of great knowledge and ability, for which reasons he might be supposed never by accident to have dropped any thing in his writings encouraging the practice of invading, and possessing, *vi et armis*, the property of others, Staunch was agreeably surprised, in the midst of his reverie, by meeting with the following passage, which he thought peculiarly applicable to his own situation and pursuits in life.—He now, for the second time, read aloud the extract—

" It cannot be denied, but outward accidents conduce much to fortune, but chiefly the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands—‘ *Faber quisque fortunæ suæ:*’ therefore, if a man look sharply and attentively, he shall see fortune; for though she be blind, yet she is not invisible."

" Well!" exclaimed Staunch, " since ever I embraced the profession, that has been my own opinion.—And, now that I find I am backed in it by so great an authority, I'll shape my course according to his chart; and my whole study shall be to conquer fortune. In no instance, or under no circumstances, will I relax my exertion, but like the falcon, whose eye never shrinks, whose wing never tires the live-long day, or the forest king who wakes throughout the night to surprise his slumbering prey, I'll weary out the reluctant goddess by assiduity and perseverance until she fulfils my wish, and crowns my endeavours to success."

So spoke Staunch; fully resolved to be as

good as his word, without taking it into consideration, that resolutions of this kind were frequently as futile, as predictions respecting the weather: and that often the blindest buzzards in the service have been more favoured by fortune in acquiring prize money, than the most expert professors of piratical warfare.

It had been always his practice, when cruizing, to keep the *Spitfire*, and other vessels he had previously commanded, under as low sail as possibly convenient. To this precaution he was prompted by having observed, that the lofty canvas invariably carried by American merchantmen, when availing themselves of a favourable wind, placed them under the disadvantage of being discerned by him, at a much greater distance than he could have been descried by them, in consequence of adopting this caution.

Under this sort of depressed sail, when about sixty miles off the port of Bourdeaux, the wind blowing rather fresh from the westward, Staun

was summoned from his studies below, by a welcome intimation from the mast-head, that a strange sail was seen on the lee-bow.

"Point to her," said the officer of the watch, placing his glass on the binnacle-head, as he brought the former to bear in a line with the man's hand, who now stood out from the lee-cross-trees, like a human finger-post, with one arm extended in the direction of the stranger—

"That's about two points on the bow," cried the master, flying down the after ladder to inform the captain, whom he found already on his way up, to ascertain the character of the stranger—the 'youngster of the watch,' having been previously directed to 'way aloft, to see what she looked like, and which way she was standing.'

Anticipating the captain's intentions, the boatswain stood chirruping his call between his lips, anxiously awaiting the master's re-appearance on deck.—Stowell's head was hardly above

the combings of the hatchway, ere he motioned to Brace, who first giving a shrill blast of his call, and applying his left hand to his ear, as if to deaden his own astounding tones, bellowed, like Stentor of old—

“ Hands, make sail.”

The seamen were seen flying up the hatchway and ascending the rigging, with that cheerful alacrity, which the exhilarating cry of “a strange sail” invariably inspires in the crew of a vigilant cruizer.

“ Let two reefs out of the taup’sles, Mr. Hasty,” cried the commander, “ and loose the to’gallant sails; but don’t let them fall, till we ascertain which way the stranger’s standing.”

Having carried into effect the captain’s orders, Hasty hailed the ‘youngster’ at the mast-head, who, despite of the lurching and pitching of the brig, had placed himself in such a position at the fore-top-mast cross-tree as enabled him to bring his glass to bear upon the stranger.

"She's a square-rigg'd vessel, close-hauled on the other tack!" shouted the youngster, who added, with emphasis—"and her sails, Sir, are of very *white* canvas."

"Keep fast the to'gallant sails," cried the captain—"she'll not bear them on a wind—brigs were not built to sail on their broadsides—up with the top-sails—haul aboard the fore and main tacks—set the jib half-boom in.—Keep your luff, quartermaster; but let her go through the water withall: or the fellow will weather us."

The sails were soon set and trimmed; and from the manner in which the *Spitfire* heeled over to the pressure of the breeze on her canvas, it was manifest to all, that the captain had rightly anticipated her inability to carry her top-gallant sails.—The forecastle, which, but a few minutes before, had been a scene of such bustle and activity, was now, from the spray fast sheeting over the bows of the vessel, deserted by all, save the seaman who 'stood by the jib-sheet,' and the boatswain who took upon him-

self to look out for the boom :—a favourite stick of his ; which he always asserted would “ stand as long as the Monument, providing she was properly handled.”

The rapid succession of seas deterred not our old friend Brace, from maintaining the post he had imposed upon himself ; who, like a dog coming out of the water, shook off every minute the foaming spray, good humouredly observing—

“ That a good-un was never yet known to be a dry-un.”

A heavy sea striking the brig on the beam, Stauch exclaimed, in an angry tone, to the steersman,—“ This is all owing to *your* steerage, Sir !—Where the devil is the fellow flying to, off the wind !—Luff, Sir, luff.—Mr. Hasty ! send another helmsman aft.—Send Toggle to the wheel.”

Just as the captain had called for his favourite helmsman, Burton, who had previously gone aloft with a glass to ascertain whether the sus-

pitions of the youngster were correct with respect to the chace, ‘sung out—’

“ ‘Pon deck there ! the chase has bore round-up, and appears to be bringing the wind on his starboard quarter.”

“ The devil she has,” exclaimed Staunch, with a smile.—“ She’s a rogue, then—overshot her port, I suppose ; and perceiving us in chase of her, she’s going to hard-up for the nearest under her lee.—Starboard your helm, ‘Toggle,’ ” continued the captain, addressing the last-mentioned seaman, who had now taken hold of the wheel—“ Bring the chase right a-head by the bearing ; and keep her so, till we see what course she means to shape.—Starboard yet.”

“ Starboard it is, Sir,” echoed the steersman. “ She carries a taut weather-helm, Sir—Her rudder’s hanging all across her starn-post—Bad as a butt o’ water towing overboard !—You must take something out o’ the eyes of her,” continued the helmsman, with a significant nod of the head, as if he felt himself the only privi-

leged person on board to offer an authoritative opinion upon the vessel's trim.—“ She's too much by the head, Sir !”

“ Oh, if that be the case,” said the captain, “ we had better run the two bow-chasers aft ; as, I dare say, the fellow will run us a devil of a dance ; and we sha'n't want them for a while.”

“ Why, yes, Sir,” said Toggle, “ she'd be all the better for it—and, moreover, Sir, if you were to pipe the hammocks down, and let the watch below turn-in with a two-and-thirty pound shot for a bed-fellow, she'd go along far more lovin'er !”

As soon as the bow-chasers had been transported aft; the shot-boxes removed from the fore to the centre part of the vessel ; and each man belonging to the watch below embracing a cold shot, as he swung in his hammock with the send of the ship ; our modern *Palinurus*, proud of the implicit obedience paid to his suggestions, exclaimed aloud :—

“ That 'll do, Sir.—I feel her tremble—she

now behaves like a lady. Trace up a little o' the tack o' the boom-mainsail, and she'll steer herself."

A stern chase, in particular, appears always to the party in pursuit the most anxious and tedious. The sun had already sunk in the horizon ere the *Spitfire* had raised the hull of the stranger from the deck ; but the former had been fortunately favoured, during the short interval of twilight, by a fast succession of several heavy squalls, of which Staunch dauntlessly made the most, by carrying his canvas " through all, and not starting a stitch."

As the night approached, the anxiety of the pursuers increased. The " idlers" reappeared upon deck, and became, to the annoyance of the executive officers, troublesomely inquisitive.

" How long shall we have the moon ?" said the surgeon, addressing the master, who at that moment was more solicitous about " setting up a quarter backstay," and securing the maintop-

mast from the effects of the last heavy squall, than in making any calculation as to the value of “a mouthful of moonshine.”

“Don’t you think she’ll double us in the dark?” said the purser, putting this interrogatory by way of consolation, to the first lieutenant, who was standing at the capstan adjusting his night-glass, preparatory to bringing it to bear upon the chase—“I’ve known these Yankees, before now, suddenly shorten all sail, and let the chaser pass them unperceived.”

“Aye!” said Hasty, “I was in hopes, the last squall would have sickened you from again shewing *your* nose, Mister Nip, upon deck—but now since you’ve popped up again, I fear the game’s all up—You’re just like a porpoise—your appearance is always portentous of bad weather, or worse luck.”

Burton, alone, was exempt from participating in this, and other similarly complimentary colloquies upon deck, during the last five or six hours of the chace. Long before the shades of

night had deprived him of the power of keeping in sight, with the naked eye, that object which had excited so many speculative opinions, and such an alternation of doubt and hope ; the ever vigilant lieutenant had taken up his station on the fore-yard, until now, nearly midnight, when the chace was considered to be within gun-shot.

As the *Spitfire* approached the stranger, the latter began to yaw, and steer unsteadily, plainly indicating the helmsman's nervous anticipation of a visit from one of those winged messengers of fate,—vulgarly yclept, a round-shot.

“ We had better give him a gun, Sir,” said Hasty, “ and knock away some of his sticks.—If we don't come up with him before day-light, we shall have some other cruiser heaving in sight, and coming in for snacks.”

“ No bad suggestion, by the bye,” said Staunch ; “ leave a Yorkshireman alone, for taking care of number one.”

“ Oh Sir,” said Burton, who had just de-

scended upon deck—"we shall be alongside of him in less than half-an-hour; and then should he not heave-to, we can easily unreave his running-rigging with our musketry.—You never can depend upon a bow-chaser on a dark night; and 'twould be a pity to do the poor devils a mischief."

As Burton had predicted, a short half-hour (by again 'carrying-on,' through a very heavy squall) brought the *Spitfire* close up in the wake of the chase. Though yawing from his course, and continuing unsteady in his steerage, some ten or twelve minutes had yet elapsed, ere a sharp fire of musketry, kept up from the *Spitfire's* forecastle, compelled the stranger to indicate a disposition to comply with the cruiser's summons. A light was shewn over the stern, but nothing short of 'rounding to,' and heaving her main-topsail to the mast, could satisfy a man of Staunch's caution and experience. The utmost confusion prevailed on the fugitive's deck. In fact, the captain and crew were at

issue as to the propriety of immediate surrender.

"I guess," said the former, who was also a part owner, "it's no pretty considerable trifle that ought to induce us to sacrifice such a valuable cargo."

"Curse the cargo," said the spokesman of the crew, who was no stranger at Portsmouth Point, though now a naturalized American citizen—"I *guess* it's no pretty considerable trifle to lose a limb or a life—Who'll pension a fellar, if he loses a flipper?—Who'll protect his wife and family, and save 'em from starving, if he's knocked off the hooks in protectin his owner's property? If you're all o' my way o' thinking, I *guess* you'll bundle below,"—and so saying he descended the ladder leading to the steerage, followed (with the exception of the mate, who kept his post at the helm,) by the remainder of the crew, who perfectly acquiesced in his arguments.

All further struggle, or trial of skill, was now

deemed by the half frantic captain, to be totally fruitless. The *Spitfire's* musketry had already shot away his main-topsail tie, and rendered that sail partly unserviceable. In vain he hailed again and again—“avast firing,” but, in consequence of being to leeward of his pursuer, his voice was borne away in the blast, and lost in the uproar of the elements. But that which now added most to his perplexity, was his total inability to ‘shorten sail,’ and perform the necessary evolutions, preparatory to ‘heaving-to,’ without the assistance of his crew; who falling into the same opinion as Paddy, when Bonaparte’s abdication was announced, that the poor emperor “had nothing else for it now but to take *to drink*”—were freely and copiously helping themselves to liquor below. Again and again, he entreated their co-operation—nothing could induce them to come on deck, or desert drink to dare danger.

At length reduced to the alternative, and regardless of the consequence of adopting so

unseaman-like a measure, he seized hold of a hatchet, and cut away, not only the two remaining topsail haliards, but the very *sheets* themselves—singing out to the mate at the helm—“Hard a lee—hard a lee!”

The chace broached instantly to ; her loosened sails flapping wildly in the wind, shaking the masts in their very steps by their rebound, and alarming the ear by the astounding noise overhead.

Although prepared for this evolution, the *Spitfire* had barely time to ‘round to,’ keeping to windward of the chace. In a very few minutes a boat was lowered, and the stranger taken possession of, by a prize master and six hands.

She proved to be an American merchant ship, fully freighted with a very valuable cargo.

CHAPTER XV.

THE BATTLE.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men,
To wield them in their terrible array.

BYRON.

THE prize had been but a few hours in the possession of the *Spitfire*, ere the naturalized citizen, and denaturalized seamen, who so obstinately refused to stop on deck as a target to be shot at, where resistance was impossible, found an opportunity of acquainting Staunch, that an American man-of-war

brig, of nearly similar force, had been spoken with the preceding evening.

Although the crew of the *Spitfire* had experienced considerable excitement during the chace, the sensation produced by this intelligence, was of a far more anxious and animating character. A sharp look out was maintained throughout the night, and the precaution adopted of stowing the hammocks of the watch in the nettings, lest the enemy should surprise them in the dark.

As the second day dawned, to their great delight, the enemy (for such the colour of her canvas, and the extraordinary rake of her masts, with other minute circumstances, proclaimed the strange sail to be) was discovered on the weather-beam, her courses dipped beneath the horizon. Almost immediately after being discovered, she was observed to bear up in pursuit.

Those who have experienced the first sensations, created by the sound of the drummer's

"beat to quarters," can easily imagine with what dispatch the *Spitfires* bolted their breakfast. Busy preparations were making for battle in every part of the ship.

Having previously served in both frigate and battle-ship, no man was better aware than Staunch, or more impressed with the disadvantages, under which an officer fighting a flush-decked vessel, such as the *Spitfire*, must always labour, as compared with those in the command of the former classes. All ships are liable to the loss of their masts, and thereby becoming unmanageable. But though a three or two-decker, nay, even a frigate, by the falling of a mast fore-and-aft, or, in other words, in-board, may be so situated, as to have the whole of her upper-deck battery buried under the ruin of its wreck and rigging, still a spirited fire may be maintained from her lower tier of guns. Not so with such a vessel as our little favourite. A similar disaster would render all her artillery totally useless, and, if crippled by such an acci-

dent when to leeward, prevent her having recourse to boarding.

To counteract, in some measure, a disaster of this sort, ‘salvagees,’ and long ‘luff-tackles’ had been got upon deck, to supply the place of a shot-away shroud—spare spars, and lengths of junk,* were placed up and down, and woulded ‘fish-fashion’ round both lower masts, in order to render them less liable to damage from the enemy’s shot. In this state of his preparations, the whole attention of the commander appeared to be directed to the reparation of injury, and devising remedies for its consequences under every possible unfortunate occurrence—a caution which, if acted on by others, may hereafter enable the naval historian to record its results in terms of triumph, instead of deplored the failure of enterprizes, undertaken and executed in a spirit of valour, which too generously disdains prudential motives.

* Junk—old rope, but particularly old cables, cut up in lengths.

The enemy was now within long gun-shot range, when finding himself closing with his antagonist, faster than he could possibly complete his preparations for battle, he took in his studding sails, and came to the wind on a parallel line with the *Spitfire*. In this position, he remained for some minutes, until perfectly prepared to commence the mortal, and, as he seemed to anticipate, murderous conflict.

His ‘lower yards’ were already slung in chains—his small sails sent down from aloft—his tops barricadoed with the largest of his lashed-up hammocks, which, whilst concealing his riflemen from the adversary’s view, afforded them admirable shelter from the effect of musketry.

His deck presented a most warlike appearance, and in every way, all his preparations intimated that no possible precaution was wanting to ensure the triumph of his flag. Match tubs, rope grummets, or rings, encircling piles of round two-and-thirty pound shot, were placed

apart out of sweep of the carronade slides. Muskets, pikes, pistols, and tomahawks innumerable, were laid athwart upon the deck—besides bar, star, double headed shot, and boxes of grape and canister, several small barrels, and bags of langrage were conveniently laid along his line of battery.

As if to inspirit his men, appropriate names for each gun were painted in large letters above the ports: and here another instance was given of the boasted “march of intellect” in the Western world, and a liberalized contempt for ancient lore. Disdaining all allusion to classical names* of renown, or the charms of allegory,

* Notwithstanding the cry of the Liberals, with Mr. Cobbett at their head, that classical learning is not worth the pains of acquiring, and that Heathen Mythology is only calculated to delude and corrupt the mind, we rather feel disposed here to congratulate our national taste, if not to chuckle with laughter at the contrast which the names of our vessels of war present to those of the most highly talented nation of the New World. Whilst their list contains only such names, as the *Chesapeake*, *United States*, *Constitution*, *President*, *Wasp*, *Franklin*, *Hornet*, which convey only the most common place allusions: ours, in adopting the *Spartan*, the *Tiber*, *Euridice*, *Leonidas*, *Ajax*,

which are so conspicuous in British nautical nomenclature, the American tars had christened them by names or deeds, with which, it may be presumed, from practice, they were most familiar, so that in looking at the upper part of their port-cells—the “Blazer,” the “Sudden Death,” the “Wilful Murder,” “Old Nick,” and “Bloody Ben,” stared them full in the face.

Now thoroughly prepared to meet his opponent, he again bore up, steering straight for her quarter. At each mast head, a flag was seen flying, bearing a vaunting motto, and on his colours at the ‘peak’ the pride of country displayed itself amid a profuse galaxy of glittering stars.

The *Spitfire* was standing on the starboard tack, keeping about a point off the wind, under topsails, top-gallant sails, boom mainsail and

Calliope, *Clio*, *Niobe*, *Naiad*, *Dryad*, and a hundred others, has associated with these floating guardians of our empire ideas fraught with historical excitement, and exquisite poetical beauties.

jib. At her peak or gaff-end, the British blue ensign waived in the wind : and from each of her lower and topmast stays the ‘Union jack’ of England was proudly displayed.

The British were already at their quarters, where their anxiety to pour out their fire on the foe, whilst approaching, was betrayed by the dumb shew, significant gestures, and imploring glances of the captains of the guns, whilst catching the eye of their commander, as they looked alternately through the port-holes at the closing enemy, or along the sights of their guns. Nor could their cool gallantry fail to inspire him with a double confidence, when he observed some, actually chalking the initials of their names on their tell-tale shot, whose effect they appeared extremely impatient to try on the enemy whilst barely within carronade range. To this impatience, the only answer given consisted in a short roll of the drum, to obtain attention; accompanied by a wave of the commander’s hand as he stood on the poop. Aware of

the purport of this invitation, the men deserted their guns for a moment, and eagerly crowded aft. Nothing could be more imposing, than the fearless eye, the high bearing, and efficient state of preparation of each, as he repaired to the quarter-deck, exhibiting, in their weapons and light dress, from which every thing cumbersome had been discarded, a specimen of active force, which might well be contrasted with the heavily armed and hampered soldier in action. They had all been selected, as already mentioned, with that attention to height, muscular vigour and activity, which constitutes what in the service is termed ‘picked men.’ And though there were minute points of attire, wherein some differed from the rest, they were all bare-necked, bare-armed, having tucked up their shirt sleeves to their shoulders, to prevent being incommoded on duty, and without either jacket or waistcoat. Instead of the latter article of dress, each had substituted as a support, during possibly long protracted exertion, a handkerchief

tied extremely tight round the waist. Above this, a black leather belt was buckled, sustaining the cutlass or sword peculiar to the sailor ; for, contrary to the general practice, Staunch had trained all his men to the broadsword, so as to enable them to act as boarders. Super-added to this belt, the captains of the guns wore another, to which was affixed a small tube box, containing about twenty or thirty little funnels formed of paper, charged with powder, and terminating in a quill, to be inserted as priming in the touch-holes of the guns —thus preventing those serious accidents, too common from the explosion of powder-horns by the flashes of each other's guns. The black silk kerchief was transferred from the neck, and now, bound round the head, restrained within its folds every straggling hair, not excepting even those *love-locks*, or long curls depending from the temples, which most youthful sailors cherish with no little vanity, as ornaments the most becoming in the eyes of the fair.

But here no place was left for the intrusion of the softer passions, and the stern call of honour swallowed up all recollections of home, of family, of past endearments.—The bright future alone attracted the eye of valour: and Hope, the hero's ruling star, usurped the sole dominion of the mind.—Happy delusion of the brave!—Exquisite excitement of the ardent spirit! which, from its intensity, nor knows nor heeds the iron shower which shall sweep those proud decks,—the fell waste of destiny in its desolating course!

Their commander now hastened to address the ship's company, assembled on the quarter-deck.

“ I perceive, my lads, your impatience to open your fire on the enemy—the effect of which, at such a distance, is not only extremely uncertain, but little calculated to impress our opponent with that opinion of our cool intrepidity, with which 'twould be well to convince him.—I have well weighed in my mind two

ways in which he may probably attack us, and therefore, have called you together to apprise you of the mode I mean to meet either—and now, my lads, to these two points I require your serious attention.”*

This intimation of his intention to his crew, was delivered in so expressive a tone, and excited such silent attention, that the drop of a pin might have been almost heard on the deck.

“Should the enemy attempt to run under our stern to rake us, we can easily, by wearing, avert his intention, come on the same parallel with himself, or grapple with him as opportunity may offer.—For this reason, your larboard, and now lee-guns must be depressed no lower than to the turn number ten on the screw,† and letter C on the coin,‡ because, in

* It is very unusual in the service, for a commander to acquaint his ship’s company of his plan of attack or defence. In one or two instances, however, it has been adopted, and its beneficial effects confirmed by the result.

† The elevating or depressing screw attached to carronades.

‡ A wedge used to raise the breech of cannon.

the event of his chusing this mode of attack, we shall meet him on an even keel."

Agreeably to these directions, and a particular order from Hasty, the captain of the after lee-carronade depressed this gun to the point required as a pattern, more fully to exemplify to the rest the commander's wish.

"But should our wary opponent waive this advantage--wish to keep the weather gage, and round to on our starboard quarter--you must (on account of the ship's leaning over to leeward) '*double coin*' and depress, and bring letters C and B to bear."

He paused again to permit the captain of the after weather carronade to carry his directions into effect.

"Done, Sir, done," cried his favourite marksman, upon placing the coins as desired.

"And now, my lads," resumed Staunch, "I must beg to draw your earnest attention to this *important* particular,--for much depends upon your following up that line of fire I wish you to

adopt, should the enemy pursue the mode of attack I contemplate.—In the first place, I must impress upon your mind, that I do not wish to reserve our broadside till the enemy gets fairly abeam ; nor is it, in the next, a broadside together, I desire.—But as soon as the enemy rounds to, which will probably be within short pistol shot on the weather quarter, and ranges up alongside, (and which, from the way we shall keep on the ship through the water, shall not be too rapid, I promise,) the captain of the after carronade will watch, with cool and deliberate aim, and fire right into the enemy's bow-port, the moment it appears *on* with the 'sight' of his gun. In the same manner the next after carronade is to be discharged into the enemy's third bow-port the moment it heaves in sight, and so on in succession.—But, above *all* things, hurry not ;—watch well the weather roll, and the heave of the sea : and bear this in mind, by thus firing your after-guns first, you don't intercept your view with your own smoke.

"I shall not say a word about throwing away shot in vain--*You* too well know their value,—and I'm sure the *Spitfire's*," here he laid a marked emphasis on the name of his ship, "will never fire for sake o' the *flash*."

Jack, who at all times detests and despises a speech at the gangway,* has no objection to an opening oration on going into action.—To this cool, convincing, and unaffected address, conveyed in terms so well suited to the capacity of the tar, the crew were about to respond with a hearty cheer, when they were stopped by the captain's uplifted hand—

"One word, my lads—Do you all understand both modes of receiving the enemy?"

"All, Sir,—all," simultaneously resounded from the assembled crew.

"Clearly?" added he.

"Well, Sir—well," cried the excited tars.

"Mark, then—suspend your cheers till the sticks begin to tumble, my lads, on one side or

* Preparatory to punishment.

other!—And now,—success to his Majesty's arms.—I'll do *my* duty—I know *you*, to a man, will do yours."

The crew, now dismissed, returned to their quarters with renewed confidence. Every minute occupied by the enemy in approaching, appeared to the sailor an hour.—This interval is, of all, that of most intense anxiety; since to many, the fleeting, awful interval between two worlds—the fond past, the dread present, intrude in rapid succession unbidden on all; the brave sailor, the not more-brave, though more ambitious and reflective superior. This intrusion is again and again chased away by the rude joke and bold boasts of a few reckless spirits, who seem to vie with each other in daring danger, and braving the fast gathering storm of fate.—But once in the thick of action, adieu to thought:—Time itself is unmarked—even fear resigns its empire o'er the mind.—Grim death conceals his treacherous approach behind the effulgent brightness of glory's golden wings, and

shrouds securely his terrors in the shout of battle, and the cannon's roar.

As Staunch had partly conjectured, the movements of his adversary manifestly indicated an intention to maintain the weather gage. He was within long musket shot, when, perceiving the enemy bracing up his after yards, preparatory to rounding to on the same parallel with the *Spitfire*, he exclaimed,—“Come—that’s manly enough ; I see he means to fight us fairly, and not throw away his time in manoeuvring.”

“ Ah, Sir,” said Hasty, “ there’s nothing like trusting to the bull-dogs.”

“ Right, Hasty, right,” said the captain, descending from the poop, and now, for the last time, cautioning his men to be cool, and to adhere strictly to his directions, relative to discharging their guns in succession.

The antagonists were now about a long cable’s length apart. A solemn and death-like silence pervaded both brigs ; nothing was heard save the murmuring surge, or wash of waters,

breaking under the bows of the advancing bark which fell upon the ear of the British, like the distant sound of a heavy surf.

“Stand by abaft,” said Staunch, in a purposely suppressed tone, lest the word of command should apprise the enemy of what they were to expect, as the latter now ‘luffed up’ on his quarter.

The words had hardly escaped his lips ere, as had been pre-concerted, the *Spitfire's* guns, beginning abaft, were coolly fired in succession, into the enemy’s ports. The effect produced by this deliberate and deadly discharge, appeared for some moments to paralyse the efforts of the foe. Almost all the captains of his guns, anxiously waiting with the laniards* of their gunlocks in their hands, for the word to fire, were felled by these well directed shots. What would Staunch have now given, had his position afforded him the opportunity to have fol-

* A line attached to the lock of a cannon, which answers the purpose of a trigger.

lowed up the blow with the sword. Half a minute had nearly elapsed, ere the enemy returned a broadside, and which, as respected the number slain and wounded, proved partly ineffectual, from having previously to ‘ hauling to the wind,’ erroneously calculated on the ship’s leaning more over to leeward, and consequently not sufficiently depressing her guns. The *Spitfire’s* sails and rigging suffered materially. They were literally riddled, and cut into shreds — for, beside a round-shot in each, the enemy had loaded his guns with old copper bolts, bits of broken bars, rusty nails, and other destructive langrage.

The injury thus sustained by the *Spitfire’s* sails, occasioned her to drop to leeward and also astern, upon her opponent’s quarter. The American attempted to cross her ahead, and rake her, but the quick sighted Staunch anticipating the movement, foiled the attempt by putting up his helm.

The American captain now clearly saw there

was little advantage to be reaped by any trial of tactical skill with his wary antagonist. On this subject, however, a difference of opinion appeared to subsist between him and his officers.—The senior lieutenant and master thought otherwise: but the advantages accruing from the possession of the ‘weather gage,’ were too apparent, and too highly appreciated by their cautious superior, to risk its loss by speculating on a perhaps fruitless manœuvre.

He knew, from experience, every thing depended upon dismasting his opponent.—With this view, previously loading his guns with both round, and double headed shot, he threw his main topsail aback, so as to permit his adversary drawing up abreast on his beam. Receiving the *Spitfire's* fire, he reserved his own for a closer and deadlier struggle, allowing her to pass on his bow. When now on her quarter, he edged away in a lateral direction, till again brought fairly abreast, within half pistol shot, and now, with the hope of felling his adversary's

masts, at which his whole lee-battery was directed, he discharged his intended annihilating broadside, which, by good fortune, only cut through a few of her fore and main shrouds, and shattered her boats on the booms.—Though evidently annoyed by the discomfiture of this well-meant attempt to cripple his enemy, whose masts, to his extreme mortification, were all seen standing and unhurt, his confidence was by no means abated.

Both brigs, at a few fathoms apart, were running off the wind on a parallel line, maintaining, for some minutes, a galling fire in this dreadfully effective position.—Fast and fierce from the close muzzles of their guns burst the pale flashes of fire. The *Spitfire* was enveloped in a cloud of smoke—still her artillery was dealing out death and destruction.—Already two ports of her opponent were knocked into one, whilst, on the other hand, the American musquetry was sweeping her decks in every direction.—A scene of mutual slaughter ensued ;

indeed, on both sides, it seemed as if their courage increased with the carnage. The mangled and mutilated bodies of the dead were now seen thrust through the port-holes—staining, with a crimson hue, the bosom of the dismal deep, as they sunk for ever into the ready grave.—Even the elements were lulled by the thunder of the cannon ; the sea went down, and the wind abated.—This circumstance seemed to facilitate their nearer approach.—Both vessels, at the same moment, sheered closer together.—They nearly came muzzle to muzzle.—Each imagined the object of the other was to board. The American, perhaps, somewhat too prematurely, threw a division of his boarders on his forecastle to receive the assailants.—Burton, who was not more bodily than mentally active, took immediate advantage of their exposed position, and sent amongst them, *en masse*, a shower of shattering ‘canister,’ which half annihilated the panting group.

A tremendous cheer, as stunning almost as

the thunder of her own artillery, now resounded on the *Spitfire's* deck.—“Bravo, our side!” cried the boatswain—“Keep up that sort o' fun, and you'll soon have to take her in tow.—Hurrah!—Strike out abaft—start their trunnels—rip her up, boys—rip her up,—damn it, never say *die!*”—an exclamation the more singular at this moment, as the dead and dying were dropping around him in every direction.

The effect of Burton's fire was forcibly felt by the enemy.—They however rallied again; and now the riflemen aloft retaliated for their loss below.—The purser, captain's clerk, and two little midshipmen, were all picked off, and fell in fast succession, by the murderous dexterity of the American marks-men.

The bends* of both vessels were all but rubbing together.—A struggle of personal

* The outer strong planks on the lower part of a ship's side.

strength ensued at the very mouths of their cannon.—The natural rancour of the dusky native of Columbia now rose to a pitch of indescribable fury. With teeth gnashing, mouth foaming, and eyes distorted, and almost starting from their sockets, they commenced another description of warfare through the port-holes; endeavouring to snatch from the British their sponges and rammers, fiercely lungeing in savage ambush with the pike, or parrying avenging sabre cuts with the Indian tomahawk.

The lee-lurch of one vessel, and the weather roll of the other, occasionally causing the outer arms of their respective ‘spare’ and ‘sheet’ anchors to come in collision, Burton and the boatswain endeavoured to lash them together.—This daring attempt attracted the immediate attention of the American marksmen aloft.—Both ball and buck-shot were levelled at their heads, and fell fast around them.

“ Hilloa !” cried the boatswain, looking abaft,

—“ Scarborough warning! — D—— their *eyes*, —they might have the manners too, to sing out stand from under.”

A triple stream of blood dripping from the fingers of his left hand, gave the speaker the first intimation of his having received a deep flesh wound in his arm.—“ Here,” said he, untying the handkerchief from about his loins, and handing it to Burton—“ Here, Sir,—just please to pass a few riding turns to stop the leak.”

The wound had hardly been bound by his gallant superior, ere the undaunted tar, placing himself in a menacing attitude, and shaking his fist, as he alternately looked up at both the American’s tops; loudly vociferated—“ *I’ll* sarve you out for this, you bush-fighting beggars—we’ll give it you presently.”

Staunch, who had been keenly watching, with eagle-eye, every movement of his adversary, noticing the threatening posture of Brace, exclaimed, in a tone of delight, “ Look, Hasty, look! —look at that fine intrepid fellow.”

"Ah, Sir, he ought to be boatswain of a battle-ship."

"Of a battle ship?" said Stowel, "d— it, he ought to be boatswain of a dock-yard."*

Five and thirty minutes had now elapsed, since the action commenced.—At this period, when in the very act of extinguishing a fire, which broke out in the quarter-deck hammocks, the gallant Hasty received a grape-shot in the groin.

"Bear him below immediately," said the captain, who evidently sympathised deeply in this disaster, whilst covering from the observation of the seamen, the writhing and distorted features of this ill fated sufferer with his handkerchief. Fast bleeding from a deep and mortal wound, he was borne in agonising torture to the gun-room, by a couple of topmen, who had but just discharged the melancholy office of committing to the deep the body of a messmate.

* For *gentlemen* of this class, the highest possible promotion they can obtain, is that of a boatswain of a dock-yard.

In vain he cried for surgical aid. The Assistant was otherwise indispensably occupied; and not two minutes before the lieutenant had been wounded, the surgeon himself, in the very act of amputating the right arm of the sergeant of marines, had his head severed from his body, by the untimely entrance of a two-and-thirty pound shot, between wind and water. For, alas! in small flush-decked vessels,* even these ministering angels of mercy are not exempt from the fatal consequences of a combat in which they do not personally participate.

As yet, no intention to board his antagonist had been contemplated by the American commander; and since Burton's and the boatswain's intrepid attempt to lash both vessels together, he gradually luffed to the wind, or sheered wider apart from his eager opponent. This

* There is no cock-pit in a flush decked vessel, and the gun-room dining-tables are, in such vessels, appropriated to amputation and other surgical operations.

deviation from the line on which, for so many minutes, both brigs had been previously running, now altered the respective positions of each ; for instead of being fairly abreast of her antagonist, the *Spitfire* became considerably abaft the enemy's beam, and found herself dropping astern and to leeward.

The position in which the two contending vessels were now placed, however, proved favourable to the immediate interest of both brigs, which for the present had ceased firing. The Americans were at a positive stand still for powder ; and not a gun could be brought to bear by the British.—Indeed, the greater part of the *Spitfire*'s starboard guns had, for some time, been rendered totally useless, by the injurious effect of their own recoil—these guns had drawn the bolts by which they were fastened to the bulwarks, broken their ‘ breechings,’ split their slides, and some of the after carronades had actually ‘ kicked’ themselves out of their carriages, and lay dismounted in the middle of the deck.

Staunch and Stowel were seen in close debate; and from the manner in which the north-countryman was pointing with his finger to certain lines, illustrative of the positions of the two vessels, or tracing a diagram on the drum-head of the capstan, it was obvious he was endeavouring to impress upon the mind of his superior, the necessity of carrying into immediate effect some new manœuvre.

" 'Twill never do," cried Staunch—" we must clap sail on the brig, and heave her about."

" Weel, Sir, you can't do beeter, as no doot he'd rather come round on t'other tack wi' ourselves, than run the chance of a badgering abaft."

It was too apparent to Staunch, there was nothing to be done with his starboard, or rather disabled battery. His leeward position deprived him of the power of closing with his antagonist sufficiently near to enable him to throw his boarders on the American's deck. But his lar-

board guns were all effective, and he had been revolving in his mind, whilst at the capstan with the master, how he could soonest bring them into play.

Calling, therefore, Burton and the boatswain aft, he apprised them both of the plan which had just struck him, to enable him to renew the struggle with effect, and, if possible, gain some advantage over an enemy he now ascertained, to his cost, to be more than his equal in many respects, —he directed Brace to reeve temporary ‘tacks and sheets’ for the courses, instead of those already shot away. For a few seconds he seemed lost in thought, when, observing the boatswain busied in these preparations, he turned his dark, animated eye around to the men at their quarters, as if desirous that his wish should be anticipated, rather than his tongue should be compelled to issue an order he full well knew must be attended with great risk of life to any who obeyed it—“ And, Burton,” said he, rubbing his hands, “ if a few of our light-

footed lads could but lay out on the taupsel yards, and let out a reef, in the face—"he would have said, 'of those infernal riflemen,' had he not been anticipated by several of the topmen simultaneously jumping on the hammocks to ascend the rigging.

"Face 'em!"—said one of those alluded to—"a sharp knife, and a clear conscience, can face the devil himself."

"Keep down"—said the captain—"keep down, my lads—don't let the enemy observe our movements until all is ready."

The topsail-haliards had been led along the deck, and the "tacks and sheets" rove ready for hauling on board; when four (for Stauncl was obliged to repress their zeal, and permit no more to expose themselves aloft) of the daring topmen, who had volunteered for this service, flew up the rattlings of the fore and main rigging.—"Cut away," cried Stauncl—"don't stand to untie," as the intrepid tars threw them-

selves out on the lofty yards.—“Cut away earings,* cringles, and all, if you like.”

Every eye on deck anxiously followed their brave companions in their flight aloft, who were no sooner discovered by the American marksmen than they opened their fire on the poor fellows, as they hung on the giddy height of the yards, in a position sufficiently perilous without the superadded danger of thereby exposing their persons to the nearer aim of the expert enemy.—The two men on the main-topsail-yard accomplished their task unhurt; but just as the brave fellow on the weather end of the fore-topsail-yard, which was nearest that top where the enemy’s marksmen were concealed, had eased down the earring of the sail, he was shot through the heart, and fell, ‘abaft all’ dead upon deck.

Twenty men killed by a broadside could not

* Earings—small lines, by which the upper corners of the topsails are fastened to the yard-arms.

have produced such an effect on the British as this solitary fall, or more effectually kindled afresh their wrath.—“Poor Boney,*—poor Boney,” for that was the nick-name by which he went in the ship, resounded fore-and-aft on her deck—“we’ll yet revenge your fall.”

Torn and tattered as they were, the topsails were hoisted a few feet higher, and both courses set in a second.

* On board most ships of war, the ‘Gally Politicians’—the ‘King’s-Benchers,’ and the ‘Birds’ who gather round the grate a’night to argufy, as it is termed, are sure to be designated by a name of notoriety applicable, as the *Jacks* think, to the peculiar pretensions of these would-be warriors and statesmen.—The leaders formerly were generally nick-named ‘*Benbow*,’ or ‘*Billy Pit*.’—A ‘Captain of the *Sweepers*,’ or a ‘Captain of the *Head*,’ alias, the warden of the worshipful company of Nightmen on board, whose pretensions to such distinctions happened to be sustained by his talents for harangue, was invariably dubbed ‘*Charley Fox*.’—In latter days, these worthies have given place to more modern titles of eminence.—*Jack* is a bizarre animal, and delights on all occasions to unite the lofty and the ludicrous; and a stranger will often be startled, if at all a believer in ghosts, at hearing a sailor sing out to another on the ‘‘tween decks’—“Pass the word for’ard there for *Bonyparty*.”—We have never been on board any ship in which there was not one of these emperors.

"Ready about," said Staunch—"Sail trimmers in their stations—and let the captains of the lee-guns stand by to open on his stern when in stays."

Hardly had the *Spitfire* felt the force of her additional canvas, ere the American, to frustrate Staunch's intention, had recourse to a *ruse* characteristic of his country.—Though not a single gun on his lee side was loaded, he bore round up, as if prepared to pour a raking broadside into his adversary's bows.—To avoid encountering the desolating sweep which this evolution of his adversary threatened, Staunch put his helm up too.—Both vessels now wearing round together on the opposite tack, brought their effective batteries, on the sides hitherto not engaged in the action, to bear upon each other. Though the American's artifice so far defeated Staunch's manœuvre, as to discharging his lee-guns when in stays* on the enemy's quarter: still, as it brought his larboard battery into play,

* The operation of tacking, or putting the ship about.

it, in the end, contributed to effect his original design.

Although the American still retained the ‘weather-gage,’ a point of the utmost importance; the order of battle might be said to be reversed as far as respected their renewing the action on opposite tacks, and with guns which hitherto had not been uninjured in the ruinous conflict. The Englishman not being as close aboard, nor yet as nearly abreast of his adversary as he could wish, carried his courses in order to bring him along side, and kept a close luff; with the hope that some accidental circumstance might place him in a situation to grapple with the enemy.

“Luff! Stowel, Luff!” said Staunch, “if you love me, keep the main taupsle touching.”

“Luff it is, Sir—she’s lifting already.”

“That’s your sort, Master”—said Staunch,—“Hug the wind as you would your wife.—Hurrah, level low, my lads, and she’s all your own!”

Perceiving the admirable direction of their fire, Burton roared out with rapture—“ That’s *you*—Bravo, boys—keep peppering his ports, and spoil his paint.”

Here the boatswain, as he discharged a carrounade, which struck his opponent between wind and water—shouted, “ Hurrah—North Corner* for ever—*That’ll* knock the barnacles off her bottom.”

The reader will no doubt exclaim, ‘ There must be a merry demon of mischief bent on these mortal errands to man,’ when he perceives those whose life’s breath can scarcely be said to be within their nostrils, thus sporting with Death as he grimly looks through the portals of life. Yet no less true is it, that this is but a faint picture of that reckless disregard of life, and irreverent approach to death, evinced oft by our sailors in

* Sailors’ joys, and sorrows, it will be perceived, are always laid down in the chart of life by the cardinal points.—Perhaps the spot most hallowed in a sailor’s reminiscence, is ‘ North Corner’ at Plymouth Dock, the name of which sufficiently indicates its position.

the intervals between the roar of cannon and the heat of action.

To prevent a recurrence of those accidents which had previously happened to his starboard guns, *Staunch* had taken the precaution to diminish, in a greater proportion than usual, the powder in his cartridges, which produced a result not at all contemplated by him, namely, rendering his shot more likely to splinter in striking his opponent's bulwarks.

Finding the *Spitfire* was closing and weathering on him fast, the American hauled on board his fore and main tacks, as if determined not to permit his opponent to approach nearer, perceiving that his musquetry was now acting with deadly effect on the British. Both vessels, therefore, for some minutes, maintained their respective positions.

The work of slaughter again recommenced with redoubled fury; and now *Staunch* perceived, with dismay, that his fire was beginning to slacken, in consequence of the fatal precision

with which the riflemen singled out for death the captains of his guns.—This, added to the increased effect of the enemy's cannonade, made dreadful havoc on his deck ; which, now rendered slippery by the blood and brains of the fallen, was again and again strewed with sand by his orders.

At this period, the enemy's gaff fell upon deck, burying under the enormous folds of his boom-mainsail, most of the men engaged at his after caronades.—Here was an opportunity for attempting to board the enemy, which Staunch was condemned to forego with indescribable regret, in consequence of his distance, and being to leeward. A very few seconds, however, elapsed, ere the fall of the enemy's gaff was followed by the *Spitfire's* main-topmast falling over to leeward, and thus luckily on the side disengaged.—As is usual on such occasions, the British received the unlucky omen with cheers. The motive of our tars in this instance might possibly appear to a novice quite unaccountable. Doubtless he would be

surprised beyond measure at finding shouts of triumph succeed to one of the most unfortunate mishaps which could possibly befall a vessel during an engagement. Indeed, it would seem as if the spirit of the sailor revelled in ruin; or that, in his own words, he was never more delighted than when “the sticks begin to tumble about his head.” Certain, however, it is, whatever may be the motive, that this indomitable spirit tends eminently to support that state of excitement, which so often ensures to British valour hard-earned victory.

The *Spitfire's* people were now seen with knives and hatchets in their hands, severing the ropes, and hewing away the rigging which attached the cumbrous wreck to the ship's side, and made her, despite of her helm, swerve from her course.—“Cut away, my fine fellows—cut away!” cried Staunch—“Don't let the wreck stop her way through the water.”

From being merely attired in a plain round jacket, (such as any of his midshipmen might

have worn,) with a steadiness of mien and coolness of purpose, watching every movement of the enemy, Staunch had not hitherto occupied the notice of the riflemen aloft; but now, his activity rendering him conspicuous, he, whilst in the act of leaning over the lee-quarter-deck-hammocks, and giving directions for cutting away the wreck, was severely wounded in the right loin.—Yet, even in this instance, his cool courage prompted him to conceal his own disaster; and he sustained himself whilst in the greatest pain, by holding on the hammock rails, until with difficulty he could be prevailed on to allow himself to be removed to the lee-side of the capstan, so as to shelter him from being again marked by the insidious foe. Just as Burton repaired to the spot, the pain of his superior's wound, and the effusion of blood consequent thereon, had so far subdued his strength, and rendered him faint, that he was in the act of swooning. The wounded hero had scarce time to grasp Burton by the hand, and point to the

colours at the peak, faintly smiling in his face ; as much as to remind him of a duty which he felt confident would be performed ; when the lieutenant exclaimed,—

“ Never fear, Sir : we may go down, but our colours *never* shall.”

Staunch had hardly been borne to his cabin, when, as if the Fates had conspired against the *Spitfire*, her bowsprit, already crippled by a double-headed shot, fell athwart her fore-foot, taking with it her fore-topmast over her bows.

“ Up with the courses, Burton ! Up with ‘em quickly,” cried Stowel, “ or the foremast ‘ill follow.”

“ No, no, no !—Don’t start a stitch.—You forget, man—the fore-runners are up,” cried Burton, with that promptitude and decision of character peculiar to himself.—“ Cut away for’ard, and take the weight off the head of the foremast.—Hurrah, abaft !—Another round, and she strikes !”

Whilst thus animating his men, and taking advantage of a partial cessation of smoke to

point, with precision, himself, a gun at his adversary's rudder, he imagined he perceived through the port-hole the enemy's main-mast beginning to totter. He waited a few seconds at the breech of the gun to satisfy himself that no optical illusion had flattered his sight. "Hurrah!" cried he, "I thought I couldn't be deceived." He was not.—The next lee-lurch brought the American's taunt and towering spar, with all its lower and lofty yards, wide-spread canvas, and heavy rigging, tumbling over the side into the water with a tremendous crash, and precipitating five of his deadliest marksmen, uninvited, into the dread realms of Neptune.

Deprived of his after sail, the enemy's vessel became now unmanageable, and fell on board the *Spitfire*, hooking, with the flukes of his best-bower anchor, the weather fore-rigging of the British brig. This opportunity was not overlooked by Burton, who seizing his sabre, which lay unsheathed on the capstan, brandished it aloft, shouting, in a tone which was heard

distinctly along the *Spitfire's* deck, whilst the fire of both ships slackened—"Stand fast—stand fast your fire—follow me every man that can raise a cutlass!"

Fast as he flew to gain a footing on the enemy's deck, he soon found himself not the foremost of about forty of the British; who mounted the side, swung themselves, sword in hand, on the enemy's forecastle, and tumbled, pell mell, amongst the Americans, who now crowded forward to repel the invaders. The *Spitfires* had been so long engaged amid fire and smoke, that the latter had begrimed not only their faces, but naked bodies; which were here and there palely seamed by streams of sweat, which ran from their burning temples. The effect of excessive excitement was, in more than one instance, contrasted by the sunken eye of exhaustion, which too visibly betrayed a frame deserted by nature; though a heart sustained by all enduring valour. From these appalling appearances, heightened by the clotted

gore with which many had besmeared themselves, in heaving the mangled dead overboard, or the fresh blood gouts which streamed adown from their own green wounds, the assailants assumed, if not the aspect of fiends, certainly the most formidable resemblance to those wild warriors who hideously paint and tattoo their bodies preparatory to battle.

The moment they reached the enemy's deck, Burton, leading on his men, was met by the master, a powerful, strong built, resolute looking man, armed with sword and pistol : the latter he levelled with keen eye at the British officer, which, happily for him, flashed in the pan. Foiled in his aim, he flung the treacherous weapon full at his adversary's head, carrying off the lieutenant's hat and slightly scalping him. Burton now rushed on his huge antagonist, and they crossed swords, a weapon in the use of which he was peculiarly expert. A few seconds had hardly elapsed, ere the Columbian Ajax lay stretched on deck. The victor strode

over the body, and cheered on his men to the attack. Fierce and resolute was the contest, where nothing but valour could compensate for the disparity of numbers.

The roar of cannon had now subsided, and was succeeded by the clink and clatter of brittle blades, which not unfrequently broke short in their handles, disappointing meditated revenge, and often occasioning the loss of the assailant's life for that of the assailed. The Americans were slowly dislodged from off their forecastle, fighting foot by foot.

Burton, elate with his success, eagerly sought the American captain, who, in consequence of the loss of both his lieutenants, was compelled to lead on his men alone; whom he now successfully rallied to a desperate charge, in which they beat down the British blades with the weight of their muskets' butt ends. Perceiving the *Spitfires* were beginning to give way, Burton shouted with energy—"Hold on—hold on your own, my lads." At this moment the well

known voice of the boatswain, who led on a few fresh hands, was heard roaring in the rear—“ Make a lane there ! — I told the bush-fighting beggars I’d sarve ’em out ! — Hurrah, for *Sally-port*.” His furious haste into the thickest part of the combat, kindled afresh the spirit of emulation. Burton thus supported, soon gained the quarter-deck, driving before him the enemy, who now tore down the fire screens, and tumbled down the hatchways in the utmost consternation.

This opportunity, it may be supposed, was not lost on some eager blades, for inflicting the broad R,* as they term it, on the heads of several, as they vanished below, without picking their steps.

“ Ship the gratings, and secure them below,” cried Burton.

“ May be Dan won’t do that same,” said an Irish waister, who had spent four long years peeping through the bars of a French prison—

* Arrow.

"It's myself, my joy, that likes to be lookin
at the inimy on the right side o' the gratin'."

The 'gratings were shipped,' and a marine centinel placed over each.—At this moment of complete triumph, an incident occurred, not without its parallel in the history of the late war, however revolting to humanity.—Whilst the centinel on the main-hatchway grating was peaceably occupied in this duty, he was deliberately shot, by a cowardly ruffian from below. The fury and savage hate which this atrocity on the part of the vanquished excited in the British, was such that it required all Burton's presence of mind and powers of persuasion, to repress their appetite for revenge, and the infliction of summary and ample retribution on the offender.—Whilst some shouted aloud for the marines to fire on them below, others, headed by the boatswain, tore up the gratings, and were with difficulty prevented by Burton's prayers and menaces, from descending sword in hand amongst the prisoners : who now, alarmed at the

consequence of their treachery, cried for quarter, and begged to be allowed to give up the offender.

Over this unhappy man's fate it is perhaps best to draw the veil.—Aware of the certainty of his doom, he was handed struggling on deck.

Wanton cruelty, under circumstances of such deadly exasperation, makes retaliation—justice; and it may be anticipated that in punishing a crime so atrocious, had the offender a “thousand lives, their full revenge had stomach for them all.”

Here a scene of the most extraordinary exhilaration, and extravagant joy ensued, surpassing all power of language to describe. A thousand tongues appeared to be unloosened at once—congratulations, gratitude to Heaven, and the effusions of affectionate friendship, embodied themselves in short sentences.—“Thank God!—thank God!”—“Well, Bill, my bo, I can swear you were first aboard.”—“Hurrah

for Old England."—" Didn't *I* tell you her mainmast 'ou'd go?—I'll bet a week's grog, there's one o' my own chalking in it now."—" The slaughter-house did the job."—" D——n their eyes, they fought hard for it, too!—Nothing like boarding after all!"—" Didn't I back you, Bob, like a trump?"—" My eyes and limbs, how the beggars tumbled below."—" Bloody wars, how we sarved 'em out!"

These strains of triumph were, however, at times, interrupted by a volley of imprecations and oaths, which, however unsuitable to the morality of our times, were, in the *Jacks'* opinion, perfectly suitable to the dignity of the occasion.—The young men seemed nearly delirious with joy, at the result of their first encounter, shouting and flourishing their cutlasses, and dancing like madmen on the decks ; whilst their seniors flung away their weapons, to grasp each other by the hand, and exchanged the most affectionate congratulations.

The boatswain swore to his mate, " D——n

his eyes, but he'd make him a bishop"—but again recollecting himself, as if he had yet a duty to accomplish, he summoned the *Spitfires* to celebrate their triumph in due form, shouting, like Achilles of old—"Come, boys, freshen your nip—rig your roarers, and stand by for three thundering cheers.—All ready?—Wait for the pipe—Now—now then."—The welkin rung with their

" Hurrah !

" Hurrah !!

" Hurrah !!! "

" And one for coming up," cried Brace, accompanying each cheer with his 'call,' and terminating the fourth with his chirping pipe of belay.

Had Homer, Ovid, or any bard of antiquity described the effects of these similar shouts of triumph, the fabled god of ocean would doubtless have been introduced gracing their victory with his presence, and waving his trident over the brave tars as a tribute of admiration to their courage.—We are not poets—the reader must therefore

content himself with learning,—that, roused by the uproar, old Neptune raised his hoary head from the briny deep, only to smile at the frolics of his favourite sons.

CHAPTER XVI.

A ROWLAND FOR AN OLIVER.

— Come ; we have no friend
But resolution.

SHAKSPEARE.

ALTHOUGH the commodore had now been some time at that place pointed out by his medical man as fittest for the recovery of his health, it very perceptibly began to decline. So much so, that the old gentleman himself formed the project for returning home immediately with his family, and placing himself under the care of his friend Senna, who now,

as a medical man, had risen as much in his estimation, as he had fallen in the good opinion of his sister-in-law ; in consequence of the insult offered to her pride, by that elaborately penned, but ill-judged, and ludicrous letter, containing his singular proposal of marriage.

The honest simplicity of the commodore rendered it quite impossible, that amid all the plotting and cajolery practised on him by his friend and his sister-in-law, he should perceive any cause for suspicion ; and he therefore, naturally enough, argued with himself, that the man who had the sagacity to prophesy approaching illness, from symptoms which he himself had cherished as indications of health, must be best able to deal with the subtleness of a disease, foreseen only by himself. The dislike, if not absolute horror, felt by the old gentleman, of again attracting the impertinent eyes of the Cheltenham public, after the discouraging reception he and his factotum had experienced in their *outré débüt*, in the ‘well-walk,’ by confining him to the

house, aggravated those symptoms, which were originally the consequence of his ill-advised journey at this bleak season of the year. Added to which, although he had the waters daily brought to him, he committed a capital error in consulting his palate rather than his constitution ; and preferring, because it had no disagreeable taste or flavour, the chalybeate to the saline. As the former was poison to a man labouring under affections like his, it is not to be wondered at that he hourly became worse and worse ; and also conscious that he had little to expect from any prolonged stay at this place. His increasing infirmities afforded his sister-in-law opportunities innumerable for carrying her ambitious projects into execution. Under one pretext or other the mornings were spent in rambling about town on foot ; visiting, frequenting the auction-room ; or exploring, in Major Hervey's carriage, the beauty of the country round about Cheltenham. The major himself was sure to be one

of the party in all these excursions, and by his assiduities, succeeded but too well in rendering them unmindful of the poor invalid ; who now began to feel himself comparatively neglected, and treated, by common consent, as though unfit to enjoy any society. After having remonstrated in vain with Mrs. Crank, on the subject of his being left for hours together to the care of menials, he at length determined to disclose his mind to his worthy cockswain, or, as he termed it, "call a council of *war* ;" the primary object of which was to preserve peace. In the course of their deliberation, Tiller remarked, "That though the coast was clear, for himself and his master to cut and run, whenever they chose, yet he didn't think 'twou'd be an easy matter to get the women under weigh. Indeed," added Thomas, "I think both the ladies are making tolerable head-way with their men—though, I must say—I think the misses is stronger on the gospel-shop-chap, than Miss Emily's on the soger."

The captain, although mortified by an intimation of a danger he never before apprehended, and which seemed to portend little short of open mutiny, had some reason to think Tiller's suspicion was not destitute of foundation. He was, however, determined, shattered as he was, to support the dignity of his cloth at all hazards; and when the ladies returned to dinner, which, in this instance, they did alone, he embraced the earliest opportunity to sound their sentiments. The first allusion that was made to his state of health by Emily, was sufficient for his purpose.

"Why, child," said he, "so far from getting any better, I only get worse every-day—and if that isn't a warning to be off, I don't know what is!"

"Off!" said Emily, with surprise.

"*Off!*" repeated Mrs. Crank, in a higher key.

"Yes, *off*," re-echoed the deep bass of the veteran; "and the sooner the better—for if we stay

any longer, I shall have no strength left to bear the fatigue of travelling.”

“That, certainly,” replied his niece, “would be very unfortunate. But, cannot you, my dear uncle, place yourself under some eminent physician here?—Besides, you’ve hardly given the waters a fair trial.”

“Trial!—what! d’ye want to drench me to death? It’s no use talking of trials, my dear—the *last of all* is not very far off.”

“Don’t speak so, uncle,” said his favourite, “it makes me quite melancholy.”

“Well, well, I’ll not say a word more—I wou’dn’t fret so good a girl for the world; but I know I never was so bad in my life—I see I’ve nothing else for’t but to return home—Senna shall have another chance to clap me again on my pins.—So, sister,” continued he, addressing Mrs. Crank, “you must make arrangements so as to enable us to start the day after to-morrow.”

“That would be altogether impossible—nor

can I see the least necessity for any such haste as respects yourself—but if you are resolved on it, I hope you will not expect *us* to relinquish Cheltenham, the moment it begins to be agreeable, and we have formed some desirable acquaintances?"

"Why, as we started together, I think we ought all to return together," said the old invalid, evidently piqued at this indifference; "besides,—a brace of single women might have found themselves all the safer under convoy."

"Thanks to Providence, it would appear as if it were so disposed that we should not want a protector: for it so happens, that our worthy, exemplary friend, Doctor Styles, will, about the period when we could leave this conveniently, be called into our part of the country to a missionary meeting—he is a zealous servant of his Master—a man of great unction in preaching—and I trust that my dear child will not lose that opportunity of increasing her intimacy with so pious—"

“Stand fast there, Katharine!—I hope the girl’s more sense than to become intimate with any such fellow. What can she want with a journeyman carpenter?”

“A *what?*” said Emily, quickly: “you are not serious, uncle?”

“Never more so, my love!—and now, sister, once for all, I will say it’s a disgrace, that a woman of your reading and all that, should listen to such a scamp in a pulpit—what can *he* know about divinity?—about as much as *you* do of turning-in a dead-eye.”

“I feel,” said his sister, kindling with zeal for the *doctor’s* character, “I feel shame on your account, Sir.”

“Say on your own,” interrupted the captain.

“No, Sir, I have nothing to reproach myself with in this instance—I would fain preserve my daughter’s principles, which it seems to be the object of your sinful mockery of religion to overturn, and render her as great an unbeliever as yourself.”

“There you are again : when you’re in the wrong box, you always try to throw the blame on me. Now I’m as stout a believer as you, though no chopper of wood chap shall chalk-out a creed for me—I’d as soon trust a marine at the weather-wheel, or a stage-coach-man with a collier up Swinn.—No, no, give me a regular branch pilot from the Trinity-house,—and why not? Were ever these chaps brought up to the service?”

“ You really are,” said this *pattern* of piety, reddening with rage, “ a perfect heathen, Mister Crank, to revile in this blasphemous manner, a person of Doctor Style’s extraordinary gifts and unction in preaching, as well as sanctity of life; attested as they are, by the daily increasing congregation which flocks around him to feed on the manna of the word. I begin to think it really dangerous to be under the same roof with one, who makes, as the Proverbs say, a ‘ mockery of sin.’ ”

“ It shan’t be for long then, I can tell you ;

For to-morrow," said the veteran, resolutely,
"I'll top my boom."

"Don't, dear uncle—don't be angry—do stop
a few days longer, and we'll return home toge-
ther," said Emily, entreatingly.

"No, dear, I'll not stop—it would be the
death of me," said Crank. "As for you," con-
tinued he, impressively, "I don't blame you, or
if I do—I forgive you; because you're young,
and led astray by your mother—but since I've
been here, I've seen nothing but courting, and
heard nothing but canting—and ill and crip-
pled as I am, have hardly been treated by you
like a Christian."

"I most devoutedly wish you *were* one,"
ejaculated the matron, with admirable compo-
sure—"Our great Teacher assures us, all things
are possible with Him, otherwise I should de-
spair of you; and pronounce your conversion as
improbable, as that a camel should go through
the eye of a needle."

"Ball-off that yarn!" said the person whose

probable future doom was the subject of this charitable descant—"it's quite long enough!—I've done, and am determined!—Do as you like—night brings home all stragglers—and when you've had your fling, you'll of course bear up for Camperdown."

"But you'll send us the carriage back, won't you, uncle?" said his niece.

"Perhaps, my dear," said her mother, rather more unguardedly than was her wont—"circumstances may render it unnecessary to give your uncle that trouble."

"Hang the trouble!" said the old gentleman, whose resentment had not sufficiently subsided, to permit him to see the evident import of the expression which had escaped her lips; "I intend," continued he, "to do more, and leave you the carriage altogether.—Thomas must be my nurse, and he and I will post it to-morrow forenoon."

The conversation, which had hitherto been too animated to last long, ceased; and the meal

was concluded in that sort of silent reserve, which is not unfrequent where parties find themselves committed or perplexed by unexpected occurrences, or untoward disclosures.

The veteran was, however, as good as his promise—and before noon next day, had performed the first stage of his journey. On the following evening he arrived at home; an event so gratifying to the feelings of the old cockswain, that had he not been too much occupied in contributing all in his power to the invalid's comfort on his arrival, he would not have failed to hoist the colours, despite of its being dark; or, perhaps, have fired a royal salute in honour of the auspicious occasion.

CHAPTER XVII.

A CLEAR STAGE.

— play one scene
Of excellent dissembling ; and let it look
Like perfect honour.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE truth must not be concealed. Although she had affected to treat his determination to return home as abrupt and ill-timed, Mrs. Crank had for some time felt the old gentleman's departure necessary. Her schemes, whilst he remained, were hourly in danger of being defeated by his artless manner, and thorough disdain of every thing like disguise. The former

was, perhaps, acquired in his profession, whilst the latter might (but for the immortal Locke's interdiction) almost be said to be an innate principle of his soul. These, and not his impiety in reviling the sect to which she belonged, were the real reasons which, in an unguarded moment, had induced her to assert her conviction, that it was dangerous to be under the same roof with him. Nor was she mistaken.—The presence of such dangerous materials as these rendered it very improbable she could carry on her plans with a fair chance of success.—An explosion was possible, nay, probable, every minute. His prejudices were even stronger than his predilections: and he could hardly conceal his antipathy to some of his sister-in-law's visitors, with whom she was more than ordinarily solicitous to be on terms of intimacy and friendship.—The unmitigated contempt he felt for every man not regularly brought up to those particular professions of which they affected to be members, could not

fail to display itself in a cynical sneer, or sour sarcasm, whenever he considered himself bearded in his own house by the dogmatizing assumption, or pert preaching, of those *soi disant* divines, who formed, at times, part of the evening circle at Clarence Lodge.—For the major, who, he perceived, was rapidly becoming a favourite, he had no such ground of dislike. He was a gentleman, easy and affable in his manners, and liberal in disposition ; but it was impossible not to perceive that Crank thought his coat was of the ‘wrong colour,’ and, to the terror of Mrs. Crank, he had been overheard, by the major himself, on one occasion, inquiring of his confidant Tiller, “if that soger was gone yet?”

The mere removal of the veteran from Cheltenham, to bring him to which place she had been obliged to resort to so much artifice, was, for these reasons, an object of the utmost importance ; and the moment he was gone, she felt relieved from half the difficulties that interposed

between her and the accomplishment of her wishes. Liberated now from all apprehensions, she resumed the field with renewed energy and confidence of success.—It had been always a subject of considerable apprehension, during Crank's residence at Clarence Lodge, that he might, with his usual bluntness, allude, in a way that could not escape the observation of his visitors, (for he always spoke so as to be understood) to his friend Burton; and the claims which that individual had on the gratitude, if not esteem, of the whole family. Had she even presumed to mention the subject to him, as one on which he ought to preserve silence, she well knew his hatred of disguise would have prompted him openly to profess his acknowledgments to Burton the first opportunity that occurred.—Indeed, she thought it very likely that such an intimation from her would lead him to suspect the hitherto undetected influence she had exerted over her daughter's mind and wishes; and, what would be still worse, prompt, in him,

a desire to counteract that influence, or induce him to exhort Emily to consult her own understanding, as well as preference, in a case of so much importance to herself and her future happiness.—Armed as the matron felt him to be, so long as he made no absolute disposition of his property, she knew it was her interest to keep him in ignorance of the control she exerted over her daughter's feelings.—Her admonition, as to the necessity of secrecy on the subject of Burton's attachment, was, therefore, confined to Emily alone ; and that was expressed in language more emphatical, and a solicitude the more marked, as she perceived that Major Harvey's attentions were become so unequivocal, and his preference so openly displayed, that nothing short of the offer of his hand in marriage could be anticipated, or the total interruption of that extreme intimacy which at present existed.

Whilst matters, therefore, continued in this state, she felt it peculiarly incumbent on her to

warn her daughter of the extreme impropriety, and, indeed, indelicacy, there would be in admitting to her present admirer, or even to a female *confidante*, that her affections had ever been, in the slightest degree, engaged by another. Her experience of the sex having given her abundant proof that there was nothing of which men were more particularly tenacious, than of an undivided preference on the part of those to whom they paid their addresses; and that possibly nothing could more enhance the value of a young female in the jealous eye of most suitors, than the reflection, that she had never been exposed even to the attentions of any mortal but themselves. To all these remonstrances Emily lent an attentive ear, through a conviction that it was her duty to listen to every thing which came from her parent with a respect proportioned to that anxiety evinced for her child's interest.—Unpractised as she was in amatory politics, she felt no objection arise in her mind whilst acquiescing in the course of conduct

enjoined.—To that course she was solely prompted by a duteous compliance with a mother's wishes, without imagining it possible, that whilst innocently performing one duty, she might justly be charged with having compromised another—Sincerity.

Further, it would be unsafe perhaps, under these circumstances, to push conjecture as to the state of her feelings.—That fierce and indomitable passion which, in man, delights to dare, and struggles to surmount all obstacles; is, in woman, a deep consciousness,—a keen sensibility, which, in its desire to elude observation and baffle discovery, feeds on the contemplation of its object in secret; and instinctively shrinks from detection.

Such are the widely different characteristics of the Master Passion of our youth, as exemplified in the opposite sexes.

CHAPTER XVIII.

WILL-MAKING.

To this complexion must we come at last.

HAMLET.

HOWEVER complimentary the alarming illness of the captain might have been to the sagacity of his medical man, it failed not to excite in him a surprise, only to be surpassed by that arising from the unaccountable circumstance of the old man being the bearer of no communication, written or verbal, from that lady, to whom he had so explicitly tendered his heart and hand. Ten days had elapsed, during which his anxiety

had increased, in the same proportion as he became hopeless of the veteran's recovery. The latter circumstance, awakened a train of thought, in which, as usual with him,—*self* predominated. What those reflections were, may be easily conjectured, from the course he adopted, with respect to his patient, whom he now failed not to apprise of the extreme danger, to be apprehended from recent symptoms of his disorder; adding, “that he disinterestedly advised him to lose no time in calling in a solicitor, to *do what was right* in his life-time, and not leave the disposal of his property, in case of accident, open to dispute or litigation, hereafter.”

Though always averse to making his will, considering it synonymous to signing his own death-warrant, Crank at length yielded to Senna's suggestion. The attorney, however, was merely employed to draw up a form; blanks being left for the sums, and names, of those whom the veteran had secretly predetermined should partake of his property.

Having so far complied with his friend's unpalatable advice, and made up his mind to die; he, to Senna's no small mortification, seemed still resolved, that as long as the breath was in his body, the secret of the final disposition of his property, should be confided to no one living but his faithful domestic. Senna failed not, at his next visit, to throw his eye, as if purely by accident, over the will, and was startled to perceive nothing definitively arranged. He had hardly left his patient, whose hypochondriac depression of spirit was considerably increased, by not having received, for some time, any tidings from those who were now uppermost in his thoughts, than Tiller was summoned by the old man to his cot-side.

He was lying in bed, feeble, and suffering severely from pain. His right hand was wrapt in a roll of flannel, which prevented the possibility of inditing any thing himself. There was an air of mystery about the old gentleman, which, as it was perfectly unusual, Tiller was not prepared

to expect. He was not destined to be long in the dark; for the commodore looking in his face, with a firm, though feeble tone of voice, thus addressed the man who had served him with fidelity, in almost every capacity, but that in which he was about to be employed.

"Can you keep—keep a secret, Thomas?"

"Could the *Boyne* keep her wind, Sir?" replied Thomas, in a tone which bespoke more trust and fidelity than ever was yet evinced by the oath of allegiance.

"Ah, Thomas—she was a fine old ship—she could do any thing but speak—But those days are all gone by—we shall never—never be in blue water, again!"

"I doesn't know that, Sir.—Who knows, but if so be, you get over this bout, but the Lords of the Admirality may take it into their heads to give you command of a flying squadron?"

"*My* flying days are all over now, Thomas—though no one, thank God, can ever say, I fled

from an enemy—But I must now prepare for another flight."

"I hope not, Sir: you may depend you're better at home."

Crank here muttered something indistinctly, about his *long home*, as he proceeded—

"Yes, yes, I feel it fast coming on—coming up with me, hand over hand. But I'm not afraid, Thomas—I can meet it like a man—we must all, in our turn, be put out of commission—No, no, there's no use in mincing the matter—we must at once prepare for paying off—so go, and make out a good pen for yourself, and see if you can't fill up the blanks in that parchment," added the feeble old man, pointing to the will, which lay on the table by the side of his cot.

Thomas, who, we before observed, had so high a veneration for his master, that, without permission from head-quarters, he had, during their sojourn at Cheltenham, raised him to the envied rank of admiral, now might have felt himself proportionably flattered by

his own promotion to the post of admiral's secretary ; had he not felt a misgiving in his mind as to his competency to fulfil, under that character, the superadded duty of proctor. He stood in a posture betokening thoughtfulness and hesitation. His shoulders were shrugged up nearly to his ears, and his eye wistfully explored the relaxed sallow features of the sick man, as if to ascertain whether he was in earnest. He was soon convinced of the steadiness of the old gentleman's resolve, who, with an air of impatience, again commanded him to take his pen and comply with his injunctions. In compliance with the mandate of a man whose authority he rarely dared to dispute, however diffident he was as to the result, he drew a chair, and reluctantly sat down to work.

The reading and filling up the blank spaces in the will were attended with some discussion : a business which might be denominated mere plain-sailing compared with the difficulties they jointly experienced in concocting the codicil.

To save repetition, we shall not trouble the reader, but present to his eye, in the italics which follow, the actual autograph of the intelligent scribe's polished pen.

"Now, Thomas," said Crank, "you must first write at the bottom—'I hereby add this codicil.' "

"This *what*, Sir?" interrogated Tiller.

"Co-di-cil," said Crank, syllabically.

"I axes your pardon, Sir—I doesn't think I can come that ere;—for you see its unpossible to spell properly when a body's a bad pen."

"Oh, never mind, Thomas.—It's no time to be nice now.—Come as near the mark as you can."

Consoled at this hint, the secretary took fresh courage, and proceeded to indite as his master thus slowly dictated.

"*To Thomas Tiller my old coxon and faithful servant, who lost an i—*" (eye)

"Must that be *in*, Sir?" asked Tiller.

"Why, yes, Thomas,—I don't see we can

well leave it out.—It would spoil what I have in my head," said Crank, endeavouring to remove Tiller's reluctance to have his misfortune recorded in a document of this nature.

"Very well, Sir, as you please—"

'Lost an i in his Magistees sarvis, and a master in won of his most devout officers—'

Here Thomas gave indisputable indications of feelings, which, however highly honourable to himself, excessively surprised his master, who exclaimed—

"Why, Thomas!—what,—are you blubbering? We must all come to this!—Come, come, man, swab the spray off your bows."

"Natur's natur, Sir," said Thomas, wiping with the lapel of his jacket the trickling tear from his weather-beaten cheek; "tho' I'm sartin the death o' the old woman herself would never a brought me to this. But never mind, Sir—here's strike out again—I'll do my duty—tho' I'd rather almost swallow a marlinspike nor handle a pen in the bisness."

"Let's see, what were the last words you got down?" said the veteran, endeavouring to raise himself up in his cot to look over his amanuensis.

"Devout officers, Sir."

"No, no—de-vo-ted—not devout, Thomas,—I never was a psalm-singer, thank God! But go on—"

'*De-vo-ted officers I leave all my shirts.*'

"I'll not have 'em, Sir," said Tiller, bursting out in an ebullition of affectionate feeling.—"I never could abide to look on 'em, much more put 'em on my back."

"Go on, I tell you," said Crank, authoritatively.

'*Stockings and particklur all my long West-Ingee white-duck trousers, laid up in ornry in drawr nummer 3.*'

"I knows, Sir—"

"Don't interrupt me, man!"

'*Thomas havin a seaman's jection to ware short breeks, or bend long togs.*'

"I'll put that down willinly, Sir—but what's to be done with the *Boyne*?"

"Why, Thomas, I've made up my mind at last—so write"—said Crank, slowly dictating.

'*I wish the Boyne to be dismantled—her masts, yards, and riggin distried, and her hull berried with mine.*'

Here Tiller gave a groan, which startled the afflicted testator.

'*Not wishin her to outlive her oner or fall in the hands of lubbers.*

'*In token of my gratus for past sarvessus—I bequith to Sammual Senna—my shore-going surgent, the gold mounted glass which kivered the Boyne, and which he has my purmisshon to convert into a kase for inclosin and presarvin putrefied spesmens.*

'*Havin lived and fought under the Union-Jack of old England, I dissire the harth-rug, rather than it should run the risk of been ever trampled under foot, may be berried with my body.*"

"Sewed up hammock-fashion, I suppose, Sir?"—said Tiller, with awkward sympathy.

"Exactly so, Thomas—and a very good thought."

"Well, now"—Already these words, prefatory to Crank's thought, were committed to paper, and were actually embodied in the codicil.

'To Leaftenant Burton I leve—my quadroon—sexton—brometer—and all my day—and night glasses—signal flags—Union-Jack, buntin, &c., for his own privite use—and the good of the sarvis.

'In a-dishon to the new teas above menshoned—I leve to Katrin Crank—all the traps and rigging of her bed-room—with the stuffed crock-adile—for which she always eggsprest such a prifference—and which my poor Emily—so much dislikes—and, moreover, I hereby order and direct, the moment I slip my wind—

"I hope I'll never see that day," ejaculated the afflicted scribe.

"Hold your tongue—go on——"

*'My kind—and faithful coxon—shall haul the
kullers half-mast down—and then with his own
hands burn the signal book on the spot, to pre-
vent it fallin in the posseshun of the enemy.'*

"And now, Thomas," added he, "sign
your name as a witness—That's off my mind!"

At this moment the bell rang, and Tiller had hardly time to conceal, according to Crank's order, this important document, ere the doctor appeared with a letter in his hand, for the receipt of which, he had been perhaps as anxious as the veteran, though through a different motive.

"I hope, my dear friend," said this sympathising spirit—"that letter, which bears the Cheltenham post-mark, will tend to compose your anxiety."

"Well!—come, break the seal, and read out—for, you know, I hav'n't now the use of either hands or eyes."

No invitation was requisite, for being per-

mitted himself to read the letter, the doctor's most sanguine expectations had been more than realized—He commenced slowly and emphatically thus—

“ ‘ Clarence Lodge, Cheltenham.

“ ‘ Dear Brother,

“ ‘ I trust you will, notwithstanding your indisposition, sympathise with us in the feelings inspired, by the gratifying nature of the intelligence we have to communicate. Your usual candour has not suffered me to remain unacquainted with your prejudices, respecting an individual, whose conduct is as exemplary, and unimpeachable as his usefulness under Providence is generally admitted, by the little flock of elect and precious souls, committed to his charge—’

“ ‘ Amiable woman !’ sighed the enamoured reader.

“ ‘ For most of your prejudices, originating, as I was aware, in no unkindly feeling to me or mine, I have, wherever conscience was con-

cerned, preserved a respect, perhaps culpable, in one so thoroughly acquainted with the utter worthlessness of everything, but that saving grace, which alone can illumine earthly and sensual minds.'

"Eloquently expressed!" ejaculated Senna.

"Never mind the eloquence, go on, my dear Senna," said Crank, rather impatiently.

"In the present instance, however, I should have done a violence to my own feelings, and been deaf to the still whisperings of that enlightening spirit within, had I hesitated to pursue the course, which, I am convinced, is sanctioned by the purity of its motive—A matrimonial proposal has been made me—'

"What, for Emily, I suppose?" muttered Crank.

A deeper hue of scarlet suffused the rubicund features of the doctor, who was already satisfied in his mind, this allusion was made to her own probable change of condition. Annoyed, however, that his secret should be thus confided to

a third party, without his consent, he was heard to mutter—

“ Strange !—my letter was *private*, and altogether confidential—but I suppose she means to sound *him* first on the subject.”

“ ‘ Desirable in many respects ; and I hope in the society of a man blessed like the doctor, in amiableness of manners and gracious gifts—’

“ Felicitously expressed—amiable creature !”

“ ‘ To pass in peace the evening of a life, sufficiently chequered with misery at its outset, in consequence of an earlier, and unhappy choice.’

“ What !—Does she mean to insult my brother’s memory ?—Oh, I smell a rat !—All this palaver’s about herself—unhappy choice indeed !—the luckiest hour of her life !—what else would she have been,” said the angry invalid—“ but a country school-mistress, or broken-down governess ?—but go on.”

Senna was too well satisfied to entertain any doubts—so fearlessly proceeded.

“ ‘ The preference of so excellent and exemplary a man; and a preacher so generally esteemed and admired for gifts and eloquence in the pulpit,’ ” (Senna gasped for breath) “ is truly manna to my grateful, humble heart.”

Here the words “ pride,” “ hypocrisy,” from the doctor’s mouth, seemed very impertinently, as it were by a species of cross reading, to form part of the letter.

“ Can’t you proceed ?” cried Crank, whose debility gradually gave way to powerful excitement.—“ You look thunderstruck, man—What’s the matter ?”

Senna slowly complied, and read—

“ ‘ Within a few days, I trust, our hands, as already are our hearts, will be united.—The scruples of our dear child, I have reason to believe, have, by my patient and persevering admonitions, and the unwearied and affectionate assiduities of Major Harvey, I trust, been so far overcome as to render her disinclined to recall to mind a preference you so unfortunately che-

rished in her young breast towards that pennyless pauper, who is so utterly unworthy of her.'

"Ungrateful woman!" cried Crank.

"Ungrateful woman!" echoed Senna.

"Cant and hypocrisy!" rejoined the veteran.

"Treachery and perfidy!" rebutted the man of medicine, flinging aside the letter with fury.

"It's bad enough!" said the old man, "but—I see no treachery."

"Oh, Sir," said the Esculapian, "I am paralized!—I'm palsied with horror at her complicated treachery—you know it not,—but I am the depository of her secret.—*She* is the whole and sole cause of all your illness.—It was to defeat your wishes, and to forward her intrigues you were removed to Cheltenham.—Your health, already renovated, was thus sacrificed.—And as I see no hope, my dear friend, of your ever rising from that bed, I—I—and it heartily grieves me to say it—I—I—pronounce her—accessory to your premature death."

In rapid accents, and with an indiscretion

which can only be accounted for by rage, and a want of presence of mind, arising from total incapacity to reflect on its consequences, he proceeded to corroborate these singular assertions by a yet more incautious detail of the artifices which had been resorted to by both Mrs. Crank and himself, in order to withdraw him from his home.—Crank, mute with astonishment, listened to the tale, to him, fraught with terror.—He felt his life had been the sacrifice of their mutual duplicity.—But as the greater and more powerful feeling absorbs the lesser, his indignation against Senna was as dust in the balance, compared with the weight of resentment he felt towards the ungrateful woman who had so coolly planned his destruction.

CHAPTER XIX.

FINALE.

—You are very near my
Brother in his love.

SHAKSPEARE.

BURTON, on arriving in port with his prizes, found at least one objection to his prospects of happiness obviated.—His share in the captured merchantman, alone, was calculated at three thousand pounds; and he had not been four days in harbour, ere the only remaining obstacle, to the absorbing wish of his heart, was removed by an official account of his promotion to the rank of Commander.

Those words, “When you can pay your mess,” (that is, become a man of independence) “and ship the other swab, you shall have *my* consent, if you have the girl’s,” which had so painfully haunted him by day in the midst of duty, and mingled by night in his dreams; as though they portended the indefinite postponement of promised felicity, he, for the first time, recalled to his recollection, with an intense feeling of delight, which none can appreciate, who have not been similarly circumstanced.—He now remembered, with satisfaction, the terms of that contract, which, at the time, appeared to him so discouragingly severe; and whose fulfilment was so problematical. He perceived that every condition had been complied with: and it is not difficult to imagine that, with a young man of Burton’s complexional character, and under the influence of a passion he had so long been compelled to control; that he calculated on the prompt fulfilment of the contract, with all the sanguine enthusiasm of an ardent lover.—

Armed, therefore, with those credentials, which he had every reason to believe would be unquestionable in the court of Cupid, his resolve was instantly formed ; and ere two days had elapsed, subsequent to Senna's penitential confession, as to the arts which had been so fatally practised on the unhappy invalid, Burton himself stood at the veteran's bed-side to claim his niece's hand. Mutual explanations succeeded to cordial greeting—the story of the old man's sorrows, and of the young man's joys were rapidly interchanged.—As the young commander concluded the narrative of his recent triumph, the enthusiastic old officer, for the last time in this life, was seen to flourish his withered arm over his aged head ; whilst Burton's heart was too kind not to mingle the tributary tear with the too visible anguish of his old friend.

By a rapid transition, natural under such circumstances, the conversation turned on the all-engrossing subject of his attachment. He repeated the old gentleman's promise—dwelt on

his own minute compliance with every condition,—and threw himself upon Crank's generosity for its fulfilment.

“ Ah, my dear fellow!—I'm satisfied you deserve the girl, and I wish her hand was *still* at my disposal—you'll see what cause I have to fear it's too late, if you read that letter, which, I am grieved to say, has been two days in my possession,” said the veteran, as he pulled the ominous document from under his pillow.

Burton's alarm was indescribable; he snatched the paper, and in looking for the signature, discovered that paragraph, which acquainted him with the whole extent of his misfortune—His usual promptitude forsook him—he stood mute and motionless; whilst unconsciously, he dropped the letter on the floor.

Happily his old friend's presence of mind came to his aid; with an energy surprising, in his enfeebled situation, he thrust his purse into his hand, vehemently exclaiming—

“ There's money—fly—save her from the

soger—four horses—crack-on every thing—your only chance!"

"I feel it!" said Burton, recovering from his stupor; "but without your written consent, expedition would be fruitless: for you well know her mother's hostility to the cloth."

"That you shall have," said the Commodore, furiously tearing off the bandages from his right hand; and with the ready aid of Tiller, accomplishing a task, which, an hour before, both would have imagined impossible.

"There!" said he, in a tone which indicated, that the effort he had made was too much for him, "*I've* told her my mind—cancel my will—cut her off with a shilling—the day's your own; if you're in time—listen to no delay: but clinch the concern for fear of accidents;" added he, handing Burton the important document, and falling back on his pillow, completely exhausted.

It was evening ere the young commander started for his destination. A long winter's night succeeded, and the lingering dawn of

a chill December's morning still found him inwardly chiding the willing post-boys, and panting steeds, which whirled him precipitately along to the destined scene of happiness or misery.

On his arrival at the '*Plough*,' he, without waiting to make any alteration in his attire, betook himself to Clarence Lodge, which bore all the appearance of being deserted. Judge for yourselves! ye sympathising souls of either sex, what was his surprise and astonishment, at hearing, from the only menial left behind, that her mistress, and several friends, had but a few minutes before, set out in two carriages, to accompany Miss Emily to church.

He heard no more—as he rushed furiously along the avenue, to the church-yard, his anxious, haggard appearance, attracted every eye. Absorbed in gloomy foreboding — his mind, brooded in moody melancholy on his now almost assured misery, and irreparable loss. In anger with the world — with himself — with

everything—at moments his heart played the rebel against his love, and wounded pride directed his indiscriminating resentment against the object of his idolatry.

Little knew or recked he, the subtle art, the delicate address used in order to beguile her innocent footsteps into a path, for her thickly planted with thorns; and induce her to make a surrender of her feelings—her heart's preference,—through a duteous compliance with the wishes and importunities of an affectionate, though proud-minded, ambitious parent.

How many mysterious conjectures, insinuations, suppressions, concealments, are often placed in the way of a young girl, in the hope of biassing her judgment in that critical choice, which is certain to fix irrevocably the colour of her future life ! How many a kind and gentle spirit, is thus cajoled into odious, though indissoluble chains ! How many a cruel, though well-meant artifice, is devised by maternal solicitude, to deceive the almost instinctive judgment of a young female ; and induce her to yield, even though shuddering with reluctance, her guileless heart,

an unblest offering on the golden altar of sordid Interest!—How laughs the Demon as he marks the sacrifice, which so fatally lays the foundation of a woman's misery; so frequently that of her headlong fall from virtue!

He reached the church—the wedding train had entered—he heard an indistinct murmur—a name pronounced, which thrilled to his heart. Blinded with sorrow, passion, frenzy, he staggered up the great aisle. The amazed, alarmed bridegroom read half her story in the shriek of his almost affianced bride; and Burton had barely time to sever those whom another moment would have united for ever. With one arm he extended the letter which authorised this interruption of the ceremony; whilst, with the other, he encircled all that was dear to him on earth.

“Oh, Burton!—how happy ought I to be—how grateful to Heaven!” exclaimed Emily, as she sought to hide her blushes on his neck.

“Burton!” repeated the astonished Hervey, “is it possible? Good God! ’tis Frederick!”

But what was the lover’s surprise, when now for the first time, glancing an indignant look on

his unknown rival, Burton found the stranger had grasped him affectionately by the hand, and recognized in him his only brother !

Twelve years had passed since their young hearts were severed.—Engaged in the service of their country in different hemispheres, and different professions, they were each ignorant of those details with which the reader is acquainted, all which were now rapidly explained.—Could Hervey then hesitate to relinquish his pretensions to a hand—to him valueless ; since the heart, which should have accompanied it, was—his brother's ?

Although the ceremony was postponed, they were soon after united ; and Hervey insisted on contributing half of his splendid fortune as Emily's marriage portion ; determining to return again to the Indies, in hopes to dissipate amidst the bustle of professional life, regrets which he foreboded were too deep ever to be obliterated ; and resolving, for her sake, to die a bachelor.

The letter of the commodore having obtained publicity, Doctor Styles prudently declined the preference Mrs. Crank had given

his addresses ; whilst her medical suitor openly congratulated himself on being released, by her ingratitude, from his plight to one, whom the now deceased veteran's will had left a mere dependant on the bounty of a son-in-law she hated, and had so reiteratedly injured and insulted.

Defeated in all her manœuvres, the saintly dame appealed at first to her pride for support under these multiplied mortifications. With this class of Protestant sectarians, however, Auricular Confession is almost as religiously and strictly observed, as amongst Roman Catholic devotees ; and, in thus communing with a Band-Brother, she has since admitted “ all these humiliations were a just punishment for her indulgence in *creature-love*, and that she could *clearly* trace the finger of Providence through them all.”

Possibly so will the Reader.

FINIS.

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